

A New Model: The Success of the Populist Radical Right in Western Europe

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

By

Nathan S. Crapo

Thesis Advisor

Dr. E. Gene Frankland

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

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Abstract

The Populist Radical Right (PRR) is the fastest growing party family in western Europe today. The PRR has seen sustained electoral success in major countries in Europe. The main purpose of this paper is to examine what has made the PRR successful in modern Europe. The Paper takes a supply-side focus on the success of the PRR. This paper will examine the countries of Sweden, France, and Austria and the PRR parties respective to each country to create a new model of success for the PRR in Europe. I found several reasons for failure of the PRR such as poor party organization, and leadership instability. However, I focused on the success of the PRR identifying policy positions, organization elements, and rhetorical reasons for the success of the PRR. The paper argues that while the Front National of France was seen as the “master frame” for the PRR, the Sweden Democrats provide the new model for success for the PRR.

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I would also like to thank my parents, Garrold (Scott) and Michelle for their support of me through the project.

Process Analysis Statement

I went through several steps of research during the process of writing my thesis. The first step was to research what the Populist Radical Right (PRR) was. I started this research by reading several articles and books written on the subject written by field experts such as Cas Mudde, Jen Rydgren, and Herbert Kitschelt. Once I felt I had a solid understanding of what the PRR was, I felt it necessary to outline the borders of the party family. I felt this would help a reader unfamiliar with the PRR gain an understanding on the PRR. While my original research question was slanted to be written as through the perspective of the centre-right, I realized during this portion of the research it would make more sense to write through the perspective of the PRR to create a new hypothesis that had not been studied before.

After the introductory portion of the paper I began to research country by country. I was originally planning on reaching Sweden (because of the success of the Sweden Democrats), France (because of the success of the Front National), and the United Kingdom (because of my personal interest in Nigel Farage and his successes). Upon the suggestion of Dr. Frankland Austria was added to this list because of the success of the Freedom Party. I studied each nation individually. I started with Sweden as I had done some previous research on the Sweden Democrats. I read articles, book chapters, and party programmes regarding the PRR in each country. Many of these articles and books came from my research in the Library and its' electronic databases, several came on the suggestion of Dr. Frankland, and some from outside research and databases, such as party websites and other educational institutions (For example, The Paris Institute of Political Studies' public database on French Elections).

During this time, I realized that the United Kingdom would not perfectly fit my Thesis. The more research I did on UKIP/Brexit and the BNP, the less each party fit into the PRR. The

BNP was an extreme right party, while Faragist parties (UKIP and Brexit Party) were single issue conservative parties. Also, the research available on these parties were not up to the standards of the other parties I studied. The scholarship on the BNP was plentiful, but in my opinion largely poor and not impartial. Whereas there was much commentary on the Faragist parties there was very little scholarship available on them. Therefor I decided to not have a section on the UK, but still use the Faragist parties as examples in my commentary.

During my research on the individual PRR parties I made sure to pay close attention to mentions of interactions as I knew this would be a major topic within my thesis. This was difficult, as while many scholars mentioned the interactions between the parties none (that I read) explicitly studied the subject. As this interested me, I believe my commentary on this topic to have been one of the stronger sections of the thesis. By the time my thesis was finished I had read around 40 peer reviewed articles, 10 books, as many party platforms as I could find for each party, as well as countless interviews, speeches, and news articles on the parties and their leaders. Though only a fraction of these made the final product, all helped me accumulate the knowledge I needed to write the thesis.

I had several setbacks and difficulties while writing the thesis. First was simply time. Dr Frankland had expressed his concern of a one semester time frame when we first discussed the thesis, and he was correct. The thesis took much more time then I had anticipated. I had hoped to do more research over the summer but was very limited in time and resources due to my internship. Once the semester started, I also experienced several setbacks, most of which having to do with course work for other classes, but also simple “writers-block” and hitting lulls in research also occurred.

When I was finished, I was happy with the research completed. I feel as if my “new model” for PRR success helps bridge the gap between traditional assumptions of the PRR from the Jean-Marie era to the present day. I also believe I contributed to the discussion on the PRR by my research into party organization and how important it is to the PRR’s success as I did not feel many authors addressed it properly. Finally, at the macro-level, my adherence to the study of the supply side of politics adds to the academic discussion on the PRR as many authors chose to approach the subject through a demand side lens.

Introduction

In 2002, the unthinkable happened. Jean-Marie Le Pen of the Front National advanced to the second round of Presidential elections.¹ In 1999, Jörg Haider's reinvented Freedom Party entered government in Austria. The former fringe parties of the right in Europe started seeing ever expanding success. Since the early 2000's, the Populist Radical Right has emerged as a new and distinct party family in Europe. Not only has the study of these previously obscure or small parties entered academia, but the parties themselves have entered Parliament in the European Union and in many individual nations.

In this paper I will examine three countries in which Populist Radical Right parties have made a substantial impact; France, Sweden, and Austria. First, I will explore what makes the Populist Radical Right unique. I will then study successful parties in the cases of the Rassemblement National (France)*, Sweden Democrats (Sweden), and the Freedom Party (Austria). I will also examine New Democracy (Sweden) as an example of a failed PRR party. I will also use examples from other failed PRR parties such as the UK Independence Party (United Kingdom), National Republican Movement (France), Pim Fortuyn List (Netherlands), and Alliance For the Future of Austria (Austria). I do this to determine what makes a successful party on the radical right in western Europe. While it is important not to completely ignore the demand-side of party success, this paper will focus on the supply-side of the political process.

After examining the Populist Radical Right, itself I will shift focus to the centre-right in the countries examined. In this portion of the paper I will examine the centre-right response to

¹ Robin Oakley. "Le Pen Upset Causes Major Shock." CNN. Cable News Network, April 21, 2001. <http://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/europe/04/21/france.election/?related>.

* The Rassemblement National, or RN, was known as the Front National, or FN, from the party's formation in 1972 until June 2018. I will reference the party by both names in this paper, using the name Front National when historically appropriate.

rising success of the populist radical right. Examining the major strategies of the centre-right for dealing with the Populist Radical Right and determine which are the most successful, both for the centre-right and the PRR.

After examining both the Populist Radical Right and the centre-right's response thereto I will conclude the paper with a new model for the success of the Populist Radical Right in western Europe.

What is The Populist Radical Right?

The Populist Radical Right (PRR) has gone by many names; the far-right, xenophobic right, populist right, nationalist right, with some even previously calling them the extreme right. Although extreme right now has a different connotation which I will explain later in this paper. However, the Populist Radical Right is, in my opinion, the best term to use to define this new party family in Europe and has been the consensus term used by most academics (e.g. Mudde, Meguid, Zaslove). The PRR has three main characteristics; nativism, authoritarianism, and populism.²

The first characteristic is probably the most important, yet the hardest to define. Populism is the first term used to describe the Populist Radical Right. However, there are many interpretations of populism, and what the term means. Some use it as a derogative to discredit populist leaders. Some leaders shy away from the term, such as Nicolas Dupont-Aignan of Debout la France (France). While others, such as Nigel Farage (Brexit Party and formerly of UKIP) and Marine Le Pen embrace it.

² Cas Mudde. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 18-21

Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Kaltwasser describe populism as a “thin-skinned ideology.”³ This is because populism has no clear ideology attached to it. Instead populism must be enhanced with another ideology. This can be on the right (with nativism, isolationism, protectionism, or others) or on the left (usually paired with socialism). Within the PRR, populism is most often paired with nativism (or nationalism) and authoritarianism. In Europe, Euroscepticism, the desire to leave the European Union (EU) or limit its influence, is often attached with the populist labels. Indeed, Mr. Farage has spent his entire political career as a leader in the Eurosceptic movement.

As populism has no encompassing ideology, I believe it is best to perceive it as a political tactic rather than a political ideology. Populism’s main concept is a Manichean divide between “the people” and “the elite.”⁴ The “people” are the righteous good of society, while the “elite” are the evil opponents of the people who work in opposition to them. This creates an “us vs. them” mentality that can be exploited, rightly or wrongly, by populist leaders. The people, often tied to nativist roots, is a general term that can be manipulated as need be. The people are often middle, lower, and working-class “native” people. Native people in this aspect meaning Lutheran Swedes in Sweden, Anglo-Saxon Protestants in the United Kingdom (UK), Catholic French in France, etc. However, the term can be changed as need be, Brexiteers in the UK, workers in France, and so on. While the “elite” usually refers to mainstream parties and politicians. Such as The Conservatives and Labour Party in the UK and the Moderates and Social Democrats in Sweden. Also, within the “elites” are often the mainstream media. The BBC is a constant target for British populists, while Le Pen and French populists target France 24 and *Le Monde*. The EU

³ Cas Mudde, and Rovira Kaltwasser, Cristóbal. *Populism : a Very Short Introduction* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017.

⁴ Ibid. 9-12

and specifically the so-called “Eurocrats,” bureaucrats working within the European Union, are also often characterized also grouped with the “elite.”

The “us vs. them” mentality of populism bleeds into the concept of Nativism. Nativism is a more radical form of nationalism. Nationalism itself traditionally has two major forms civic-nationalism and ethnic-nationalism.⁵ Civic nationalism is most commonly associated with the United States of America. This form of nationalism is based around a shared sense of civic duty and pride in shared characteristics of a people. Whereas ethnic nationalism is based upon blood and heritage. One can only be born into a nation in this version of nationalism where in civic nationalism one can assimilate into a nation. The main idea of nativism is that the native ethnic group and the interest of that group should be of the up most importance to the state. Nativism takes this pride in the nation a step further than nationalism. Nativism evolves into ethnocentrism, the belief that the “native” ethnic group should be put first and should be put ahead of those not within the group. Minorities therefore, should not enjoy the same rights and privileges of the ethnic group of the nation. The *Nouvelle Droite* of France built upon this theory to pioneer the notion of “ethno-pluralism.”⁶ This theory is the exact opposite of multiculturalism. Instead it states that the cultures of different ethnic groups are incompatible with one another. Therefore, they must be kept separate from each other. This theory provided two main advancements for PRR parties. First, it gave legitimacy to many of their policies such as welfare chauvinism (which will be expanded upon later). Second, it introduced the idea that culture could be used in place of ethnicity.

⁵ Matt Golder. "Far Right Parties in Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 19, no. 1 (2016): 477-497. 480

⁶ Jens Rydgen. "Is Extreme right-wing Populism Contagious? Explaining the Emergence of a New Party Family." *European Journal of Political Research* 44, no. 3 (2005): 413-437. 427

Today, unlike the days of the past, PRR parties will rarely speak about race or ethnicity but instead frame their argument in terms of culture. The same theory of nativism applied, but just as Nagy/Dubcek tried to create “Socialism with a human face⁷” in Czechoslovakia and Hungary respectively, it allows leader of the PRR to create a “right wing populism with a human face.” By framing the “us vs. them” dispute between clashing cultures, rather than a strictly race issue, it allows the party to appear much more moderate.

The most important issue to PRR parties is that of immigration. This is why some refer to the party family as the xenophobic right. Often tied with nativism, low-income individuals with high contact rates with non-European immigrants are the most likely to vote for PRR parties.⁸ Which may explain why the Syrian refugee crisis of 2015 is often used as an explanation of the recent rise in support for PRR parties. During this time large numbers of non-European immigrants came to low income areas in cities across Europe. The PRR often hold ownership of the immigration issue. This gives them a strong advantage when immigration becomes a salient issue.

The most distinctive aspect of PRR parties is their authoritarian leanings. It is even argued this may be the most important aspect of the party family’s ideology.⁹ Though a party would never outright claim to be authoritarian. Rather using phrases like the “party of law and order,” PRR parties often frame the new or proposed, governmental strength as defence of liberty, though many on outside interpret these policies as the stripping thereof. Authoritarianism

⁷ William Hitchcock. *The Struggle For Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945 To The Present Day*. New York: Random House Inc, 2003. 288-293

⁸ Strömblad, Per, and Malmberg, Bo. “Ethnic Segregation and Xenophobic Party Preference.” *Journal of Urban Affairs*. 38, no. 4 (2016). 539

⁹ Ann-Cathrine Jungar, and, Anders Ravik Jupskås, "Populist Radical Right Parties in the Nordic Region: A New and Distinct Party Family?" *Scandinavian Political Studies* 37, no. 3 (2014): 215-238. 218.

is a difficult topic to cover because it can differ from state to state and can be justified in many ways. There are examples of authoritarians on the left, such as Josef Stalin, Erich Honecker, and Hugo Chavez. While on the right some example could include Augusto Pinochet, Francisco Franco, and Antonio Salazar. The basic principle of authoritarianism being that civil society is either non-existent or controlled by the state.

Among the PRR there is varying degrees of authoritarianism ideologies. Parties such as UKIP (under Nigel Farage) and the FPÖ believe generally in a smaller state. With complete control over immigration, national laws, and strict punishments for lawbreakers. Generally, they believe in freedoms of the press. Even though they are used as a rhetorical enemy. Whereas parties such as the National Democrats (Sweden) and the Front National (France) believe in much stronger governments. They believe that the state should control the media, the market, and many other aspects of civilian life. These differences will be further expanded upon in the section on the individual parties.

The PRR has emerged fairly recently as a distinct party family. Similar ideologies bind the parties together, but the family has “borders” with other distinct party families. Perhaps the most important and most controversial border family is that of the Extreme Right (ER). Some academics group these two parties’ families together, however, there has been a decisive split in the families since the turn of the century. Many PRR parties may have gotten their start as ER parties (e.g. Sweden Democrats¹⁰). They have since moderated themselves.

There is a distinct difference between basic beliefs of the PRR and the ER. The PRR believes, or at least wishes to work within, the democratic system. Whereas the ER wishes to

¹⁰ Anders Hellstrom, and T. Nilsson, "We Are the Good Guys' Ideological Positioning of the Nationalist Party Sverigedemokraterna in Contemporary Swedish Politics." *Ethnicities* 10, no. 1 (2010): 55-76. 57

overturn the system to create a true authoritarian/totalitarian state. The PRR does not advocate radical change to the *system* of governance within the nation. The ER openly rejects the current system and desires a quick and often dramatic shift in governance and often culture. Examples of the extreme right in Europe are the National Democratic Party (Germany), the Nordic Resistance Movement (Sweden), and Alliance Royale (France). The ER is unified by its anti-democracy position.

The other border of the PRR is the centre-right (CR). The CR is not in itself a party family. Rather it is an umbrella term for the three historic mainstream party families of the right; the Conservatives, the Liberals, and the Christian Democrats. The Conservatives are perhaps the most difficult to define, as conservatism is relative to each country. For example, American Conservatives (Republicans) vehemently oppose socialized health care. Where the Conservative Party of the UK support the NHS (National Health Service). The Tories campaign on increasing funding in of the NHS.¹¹ However, there are several characteristics that bind conservatives together. First is the belief in and promotion of traditional (Judeo-Christian/Western) values. Since the 1980's Conservatives have adopted neoliberal economic positions based upon the efforts of President Ronald Reagan (Republican-United States) and Margaret Thatcher (Conservative-United Kingdom).¹² In France, Conservatives take the form of Gaullists. Gaullists call for a strong centralized government and more government regulation in the economy. Today, Conservatives are the largest party on the right in France (Les Républicains), the United Kingdom (Conservative Party also known as "Tories"), and Sweden (the Moderate Party).

¹¹ Conservative and Unionist Party. "Forward, Together: Our Plan for a Stronger Britain and a Prosperous Future." 2019 67-68. NOTE This was the 2019 Election Manifesto for the Conservative and Unionist Party

¹² Mudde. "Populist Radical Right in Europe." 28

Liberals and conservatives both support free market economies. However, liberals promote *laissez-faire* economics. Liberals generally believe that government should remain as small and insignificant to the individual's life as possible. While conservatives promote family values, liberals promote individual freedom as the core of their domestic policy. There are several large liberal parties across Europe including the Liberal Democrats (UK), Liberal Party (Sweden), Centre Party (Sweden), Democratic Movement (France), and NEOS – The New Austria and Liberal Forum (Austria).

Finally, Christian democrats, like conservatives, believe in promoting traditional Christian Values. Christian democrats evolved from various Catholic movements and parties. They become a mainstay of 20th (and into the 21st) century European politics¹³. Christian Democracy is based around ideas of human rights, class reconciliation, and liberal democratic values.¹⁴ While conservatives and liberals are ideologically based parties. Christian democratic parties often position themselves as “catch-all” parties. These parties are often based upon the people's unified Christian culture, rather than political or class divisions. While there are exceptions, such as Sweden, most countries that have a strong Christian democratic parties do not have a relevant conservative party and vice versa. The Austrian People's Party (Austria), Christian Democrats (Sweden), and Christian Democratic Union (Germany) are all major Christian Democratic parties in Europe.

The centre-right parties of Europe have long dominated modern European politics, along with the Social Democrats of the centre-left. With the rise of the PRR in the 21st century, the

¹³ Stathis N Kalyvas. *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1996. 16-19

¹⁴ Stathis N. Kalyvas and Kees van Kersbergen. “Christian Democracy” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2010 13:1, 183-209 Retrieved online via <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.021406.172506> (accessed Oct. 15, 2019)

centre-right must also compete for its vote share on the right as well as competing against the centre-left. In fact, centre-right response to the PRR is often more influential on the success of PRR parties than socioeconomic and institutional factors.¹⁵ When competing against the PRR the centre-right has employed three major strategies.

The First of these strategies is that of Coercion. Coercion is the most popular action of the Centre-Right. It is simply the act of ignoring the PRR parties. In many cases, this may not even be an intentional tactic, if the PRR is small or regional and on a centre party central committee's radar. However, mainstream parties also often put a *de facto cordon sanitaire* on fringe parties, including PRR. This has been most evident in France, where mainstream parties attempted for years to exclude the Front National from public debate and discourse. They did not use force or law to achieve this. Instead they use their own actions to reinforce to ostracization of the FN.

The second strategy employed by the centre-right is cooption. Cooption is when the centre-right party adopts portions of the PRR programme or their rhetoric. It is most successful when the centre-right party is able to take ownership of the issue away from the PRR. The best example of cooption is the issue of Brexit. UKIP was viewed by any as a single-issue party yet was polling around 15%.¹⁶ Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron promised a national referendum on the campaign trail. Since the 2016 referendum Brexit has largely been viewed as a Tory issue (even though many favored the remain side personally).

¹⁵ Bonnie Meguid. "Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success" *American Political Science Review* 99, No. 3 (August 2005). 347-359 354

¹⁶ BBC. "Election 2015:Poll Tracker" *BBC.com*. British Broadcasting Company. May, 6, 2015 (Accessed December, 4, 2019) via <https://www.bbc.com/news/politics/poll-tracker>

The final strategy of the centre-right is that of cohabitation. Cohabitation occurs when the centre-right and PRR work together for electoral or governmental success. The first form, electoral success is virtually non-existent at the national level. However, it has occurred in several local elections. The second form is also rare but has happened. The PRR has been in government coalition (or officially supported governments) in 10% of European Countries.^{17*} Perhaps most notably the FPÖ of Austria has been in government three times since 2000,¹⁸ supporting ÖVP governments.

National Experiences with the Populist Radical Right

Sweden: A Flash And A New Model

The most well-known PRR party in Sweden is one of most successful PRR right parties in all of Europe, the Sweden Democrats (SD). SD was formed in 1988 when party founder Andreas Klarström split from the Neo-Nazi Nordiska Rikspatriet. At this time the party was affiliated with the “Bavara Svergie Svenst (Keep Sweden Swedish)” far right movement.¹⁹ At this point in its history, SD was an extreme right neo-Nazi party. However, the party idolized Jean-Marie Le Pen and the FN of France, creating a link with the party that would last until the present day.

In 1995, the party started its shift towards the mainstream. Klarström was replaced with a former Centre Party MP Mikael Jansson. Jansson went to great lengths to modernize the party. He banned the use of uniforms by the party. He also purged as many neo-Nazi's as he could, including the party's founder Klarström! In 1999, the party put many of these changes to paper,

¹⁷ Meguid. “Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success.” 347

*NOTE- This number includes Green Parties as well as PRR parties.

¹⁸ Heinisch, Reinhold, and Kristina Hauser. “The Mainstreaming of the Austrian Freedom Party: The More Things Change...” in *Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the Mainstream?*.

¹⁹ Helstrom, and Nillson “We Are the Good Guys’ Ideological positioning of the nationalist party Sverigedemokraterna in contemporary Swedish politics,” 57

altering the party platform to a form which can be seen as the first platform of the current SD. Many “fascist” and national socialist elements, that were seen as being outside of the norm in Swedish politics were stripped from the platform. Examples of these policies are capital punishment and nationalization of many private industries.²⁰ The party also adapted several human rights elements into its platform including the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Though this modernization of the party was needed, many hardliners accepted the shift to the PRR, but could not accept drastic policy change. In 2001, these hardliners split to form the National Democrat Party.²¹ After a poor showing in the 2002 election, Youth Party Leader Jimmie Åkesson defeated Jansson in the party leadership election in 2005. Åkesson was only 26 at the time of election. He has proved to be a strong and charismatic leader who remains at the head of his party nearly 15 years later.

Åkesson has worked hard to strip SD of any remaining extremist elements. He has kicked out several members of the party found to have extremist views. Even right before elections, when it could have hurt the party. Åkesson has been very clear on his position on the extreme right. Of this he stated bluntly “those who are not democrats cannot be members of the Sweden Democrats.”²²

Åkesson also fully adopted populist rhetoric as part of his rebranding of the party. SD has held issue ownership of immigration since its inception. The shift to populism feels natural

²⁰ Simon Oja and Bridgette Mral. “The Sweden Democrats Came In From The Cold: How the Debate about Allowing the SD into Media Arenas Shifted between 2002 and 2010” in *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse*, ed Rth Wodak and Bridgette Mral Majid Khosravini, 277-292 (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013)

²¹ Ibid 280

²² Helene Dauschy. “Jimmie Åkesson, the architect of Sweden’s far-right.” *The Times of Israel*. 6 September 2018. Via <https://www.timesofisrael.com/jimmie-akesson-the-architect-of-swedens-rising-far-right/>

holding ownership of issues that can be easily cast through a populist lens. Åkesson has been successful in breaking down the traditional left vs right dichotomy of politics and replacing it with “us vs them.” The “us” being the “man of the street” of Sweden. With “them” being, not only the immigrant population, but also the elected “elite” who have failed the people.²³ Åkesson has also adapted “multicultural nationalism.” This is the term given to the attempt to make nationalism about culture rather than race by Anders Hellström. Therefore, no longer does “Bevara Sverige Svensk” mean ethnically Swedish like it did at the party’s foundation, rather culturally Swedish. Meaning immigrants from every race can become Swedish so long as they adapt Swedish values and assimilate into Swedish culture²⁴ (It should be noted the SD does not use the “Bevara Sverige Svensk” motto now and has not since 1995).

Party	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Moderates	18.3 (66)	21.9 (80)	22.4(80)	22.9 (82)	15.3 (55)	26.2 (93)	30 (107)	23.3 (84)	19.8 (70)
Liberal (People's)	12.2 (44)	9.1 (33)	7.2 (26)	4.7 (17)	13.1 (48)	7.5 (28)	7 (24)	5.4 (19)	5.5 (20)
Centre	11.3 (42)	8.5 (31)	7.7 (27)	5.1 (18)	6.2 (22)	7.9 (29)	6.6 (23)	6.1 (22)	8.6 (31)
Christian Democrats	2.94 (0)	7.1 (26)	4.1(15)	11.8 (42)	9.2 (33)	6.6(24)	5.6 (19)	4.6 (16)	6.3 (22)
New Democracy	-----	6.7 (25)	1.2 (0)	.2 (0)	.04 (0)	----	----	----	----
Sweden Democrats	----	----	----	.4 (0)	1.4 (0)	2.9 (0)	5.7 (20)	12.9 (49)	17.5 (62)
National Democrats	----	----	----	----	.17 (0)	.06 (0)	.02 (0)	----	----

*The above table represents each right leaning party of Sweden’s vote share in general elections since the founding of the Sweden Democrats with the seats earned in the Riksdag in parentheses. The data was conglomerated from SCB databases*²⁵

The Sweden Democrats focus is on social issues, rather than economic. Thought that is not to say economics is completely ignored. SD has long claimed to be the “rightful heir of a long Social Democratic tradition of safeguarding the interests of the common people.”²⁶ This

²³ Anders Hellstrom and Tom Nilsson and Pauline Stoltz “Nationalism vs, Nationalism: The Challenge of the Sweden Democrats in the Swedish Public Debate” *Government and Opposition*. Vol 47, No 2. 186-205 (2012). 190

²⁴ Ibid 194

²⁵ SCB. “Elections to the Riksdag- seats won by region and party Year of election 1973-2018.” *Statistics Sweden*. (Accessed 18 November, 2019) via

http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/en/ssd/START__ME__ME0104__ME0104C/Riksdagsmandat/

²⁶ Anders Hellstrom and Tom Nilsson and Pauline Stoltz “Nationalism vs, Nationalism: The Challenge of the Sweden Democrats in the Swedish Public Debate” *Government and Opposition*. Vol 47, No 2. 186-205 (2012). 196

illustrates that SD is in favor of a policy called “welfare chauvinism.” This policy is quite simple yet can be quite controversial. Welfare chauvinism is the support for a social safety net, or social programs of varying degrees. In SD’s case they support the current welfare state of Sweden. However, the “chauvinism” attachment is that these social benefits should only help “our people.” In Sweden this means that only native Swedes would be able to receive these benefits. Immigrants, migrants, and refugees would still be required to pay into these services via their taxes but would be barred from receiving their benefits. Some parties will go one step further and propose banning certain minorities from receiving any benefits, but SD does not go this far. The rhetorical reasoning given to this program is as follows, if an immigrant does come to our country, they should work hard to benefit society. If the immigrant is on social services, they are not contributing to the society, but rather are a burden to it as they are taking services otherwise given to natives. Welfare chauvinism is often a quite popular proposition to low- and working-class individuals, but it remains a highly controversial issue. Prohibiting residents, and in many cases citizens, from receiving the social benefits they pay into is seen as morally wrong by many.

Domestically SD focuses on issues of law and order. Immigration, prevention of sexual assault, and an overall “protection” of the people of Sweden are the main focuses of SD policy.

On Immigration, SD promotes the following,

Sweden needs a safe and secure border to keep organized crime, human trafficking and terrorism away. We welcome anyone who contributes to our society, who follows our laws and respects our customs. Anyone who, however, comes here and exploits our systems, commits crimes or puts our citizens at risk is not welcome. We believe that Sweden should help people in need, and this should be done where the need is greatest. We want to stop the asylum reception in Sweden and instead invest in real refugee assistance. We want to enable more people to return to their home countries.²⁷

²⁷ Sweden Democrats. “This is what we want” *Sweden Democrats*. <https://sd.se/vad-vi-vill/> (accessed 18 October 18, 2019) *Website automatically translated to English.

In practice, this sentiment promotes foreign aid/humanitarian aid to keep migrants in their home country, or a nearby refugee camp. It promotes investment in police to put officers on the streets to keep the peace, and on the border to guarantee the process of entering the country is secure. Furthermore, it once again promotes nativism, and the protection of “Swedish” peoples.

A mentioned above, another issue that SD has championed is that of sexual assault and rape. Sexual assaults have skyrocketed in recent years in Sweden. In 2018, nearly 10% of Swedish women said they had been victims of sexual crimes. 22,500 sexual crimes were reported in that year.²⁸ The spike in sexual crimes has corresponded with the Syrian refugee crisis of 2015, and increased immigration since. Though there is no concrete link between these two statistics. This issue has been considered taboo by the mainstream parties. But Åkesson and SD have taken up the issue. They have claimed that since Sweden is “importing” individuals from cultures with different values and attitudes on gender equality and sex crimes, these crimes have risen. Though, critics dismiss SD and Åkesson reasoning and proposals linking the issues of immigration and sexual crimes as baseless, the issue has been a rhetorical success for SD. SD suggests Sweden “[t]ake action against sexual crime through sharply sharpened penalties, enable public records of certain sex offenders and strengthen the police work to secure and save DNA evidence.”²⁹ While somewhat vague, the suggestion is to increase the legal penalty for these types of crimes. The hope is that the increased punishment will dissuade protentional criminals and hopefully lead to more prosecutions through the storage of DNA evidence. At the least would definitely punish those who have committed crime.

²⁸Brå. “Rape and sexual offenses.” *Brå* via <https://www.bra.se/statistik/statistik-utifran-brottstyper/valdtakt-och-sexualbrott.html> (Accessed 18 October 2019)

²⁹Sweden Democrats. “Equality and Justice.” *Sweden Democrats*. Via <https://sd.se/vad-vi-vill/jamstalldhetspolitik/> (Accessed 18 October, 2019)

On immigration, as expected, SD calls for reducing the number of immigrants and migrants to Sweden. The rationale is simple, Sweden needs to take care of Swedes first. As there are Swedes still homeless, jobless, and suffering Sweden cannot afford to allow more people in. SD puts a strong focus on refugees. After the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis Sweden took the most refugees per capita of any EU member.³⁰ SD continues to use language of Swedish altruism in this rhetoric though. SD's policy is that, while Sweden cannot take in more refugees, they should still help these people. To do this Sweden can redirect foreign aid to countries and organizations in desperate need of humanitarian aid. Here money can be used to improve the quality of life in the countries with the issues directly. Rebuilding the countries from within so individuals can live good lives in their own country.

The Flash

New Democracy (NyD*) is an enigma in politics. Its story is both very unique and common at the same time. There have been many "flash" parties throughout Europe. Flash parties are parties that appear, seemingly out of nowhere. They win representation in parliament, only to disappear after the next election, never receiving representation again. In this case NyD is common. In 1991, NyD won 6.7% of the national vote earning 25 seats in the Riksdag (Swedish parliament). Yet just three short years later in 1994, NyD only won 1.2% of the vote. And only 11 years later the party would contest in its last elections. Though official party operations had ceased years before.

³⁰ James Traub. "The Death of the Most Generous Nation on Earth" *Foreign Policy*. February 10, 2016. Via <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/10/the-death-of-the-most-generous-nation-on-earth-sweden-syria-refugee-europe/> (Accessed 19 October, 2019)

*Both New Democracy and the National Democrats are often abbreviated "ND," I have opted to abbreviate New Democracy as NyD, Ny being the original Swedish word for New, for clarity.

New Democracy was formed just 7 months before the 1991 Swedish elections by Ian Wachtmeister, a Swedish count and businessmen, and Bert Karlsson, an entertainment entrepreneur.³¹ This led to a unique dynamic of dual leadership within the party. However, when NyD entered the Riksdag, Wachtmeister became the party leader in the parliament and would eventually solidify himself as the leader of the party.

Though Wachtmeister became the *de facto* party head, it did not mean he was the unquestioned leader of the party. He favored a strong centralized party, where the party list was selected by party leadership and wanted to distance the party from local elections. His reasoning for these positions was simple, he wanted to keep the extreme right out of the party. He feared that if the party was left on its own accord, it could entice those from the extreme right to run under its banner. His fear was not unfounded, NyD was a radical right party with the legitimacy that extreme right parties lack. This fear led to the party passing accords in 1992 to centralize the party in Wachtmeister's vision. Local parties were not permitted to run NyD candidates in local election and could only contract with the national parties to support the national party effort during federal elections³². His opponents called these actions "undemocratic," and questioned his ability to lead the party.

The action did prevent the extreme right from infiltrating the party. It also cursed the party. It made the party, in effect a federal-level party only. Parties like this can be successful, for example Bloc Québécois (BQ) in Canada, these parties are often endorsed and work with other parties at the local level, in BQ's case they work with Parti Québécois, albeit informally. The neglect of local politics gave room for the Liberal People's Party and others to take away

³¹ Lars Svåsand, "Scandinavian Right-Wing Radicalism". In *The New Politics of the Right: Neo Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, ed. Hans-Georg Betz and Stefan Immerfall. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998) 79

³² Ibid. 82

much of their support at local levels. The important grassroots leaders and campaigners can grow through parties at local levels, and impact federal elections. This could be an example of the downfalls of Wachtmeister and Karlsson's politic naiveté. Another criticism of Wachtmeister is that he ran the party like a business rather than a political party.³³ While the appearance of outsiders helped in their initial success their inexperience with politics proved to be an obstacle to build the party further.

While Jimmie Åkesson (SD) has spent nearly his entire adult life at the forefront of politics, he has been able to remain the "outsider" of Swedish politics. NyD leaders were outsiders but did not have the political experience of Åkesson. This led to several problems within the party, as seen above. PRR parties often attempt the "one foot in, one foot out" theory of governance. They may strategically support parties on the right, but won't officially work with them, this way they can appear to be outsiders opposing all mainstream parties. Wachtmeister and NyD did not take this approach. They fully supported the nonsocialist bloc in the Riksdag, albeit indirectly.³⁴ Members of New Democracy did not support a Prime Minister candidate. This gave the right-wing alliance of the Moderate Party, Liberal People's Party, Centre Party, and Christian Democrats led by the Moderate's Carl Bildt, the majority it needed.

By 1994, the once two-headed party was headless. Karlsson had stepped down as party leader before the 1991 elections in favor of Wachtmeister. By 1993, Wachtmeister, disillusioned by those who had grown frustrated with his leadership, stepped down as party leader. This abrupt resignation "threw the party into a state of anarchy."³⁵ The party was never able to recover from losing its two founders. In the following 1994 election NyD received a mere 1.4% of the vote,

³³ Ibid. 91.

³⁴ Ibid. 90.

³⁵ Ingemar Wörlund "The Swedish Parliamentary Elections of September 1994" *Scandinavian Political Studies*. 18 (4). 285-291. 289.

losing all 25 seats it held in the Riksdag. As poor as this showing was for the party, it proved to be the last time the party held any significant share of influence on Swedish elections. In the next two elections they contested, NyD received less than one third of a percent of the vote in each election. Cementing themselves as a “flash party” for the history books.

Following Wachtmeister’s resignation, six people would be the party leader in the six years before the party declared bankruptcy and ceased existence in 2000; Harriet Colliander, Vivianne Franzén, Bengt Andersson, John Bouvin, Per Anders Gustavsson, and Ulf Eriksson. None of these leaders were able to save the party.

NyD was unique in the PRR as it put economic issues above cultural issues.³⁶ This is the major difference between NyD and SD which followed. Much of their domestic policy is similar, with a focus on curbing immigration, and cracking down on crime with Sweden. However, while SD favors the status quo of the Swedish mixed economy, NyD was almost Reaganistic in its economic policy. NyD opposed main elements of the mixed economy. It called for radical privatization of the Swedish economy, abolish state monopolies, and the reduction of taxes by at least 10%.³⁷ In the economic regard the party was similar to the Progress Parties of other Nordic countries. Though many scholars have from its inception studied NyD with the Progress Parties, NyD distanced themselves from those parties, yet the similarities remain.

France: The Historically Strong

Perhaps the most influential PRR party is the Rassemblement National (RN) of France. Formerly the Front National (FN), Party President changed the name for the historic party in June 2018 as part of her “de-demonization” strategy for the party. In this section, and throughout the paper, I

³⁶ Jens Rydgren. “From Tax Populism to Ethnic Nationalism: Radical Right-wing Populism in Sweden” New York: Berghahn Books 2006. 50

³⁷ Ibid.

will refer to the current party as RN, but use the old party name of FN for the time period in which it was known by that name.

The Front National was founded in 1972 by Jean-Marie Le Pen in an effort to bring together several elements of the far/extreme right in France. The party was a collection of Poujadistes, neo-fascists, conservatives, anti-Gaullists, and those nostalgic for Vichy France.³⁸ This conglomeration was led by the charismatic Jean-Marie Le Pen. He had previously served as a deputy of the National Assembly as a member of Pierre Poujade's List. Keeping the conglomeration of members unified has proved to be a difficult task for the FN. The party experienced its first split in 1974 when two groups split from the party. The Ordre Nouvelle split because they felt that FN was too moderate of a party. While the Parti des Forces Nouvelle split because they felt FN was too extreme of a party.

The party stayed small and insignificant until 1978, when they adapted a new party platform. This platform rejected Poujadiste anti-capitalism, and in fact endorsed a new neo-liberal economic programme. The Programme called for the lowering of taxes, the dissolution of government bureaucracy, drastic reduction to state intervention in the economy, and further European economic integration.³⁹ This programme, similar to the platforms that launched the careers of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher have led some to call it "Reaganite before Reagan."⁴⁰ Although this platform may be unrecognizable to the RN of today it set the stage for the electoral breakthrough that FN needed. It presented FN as a party with unique (to France) policy options to question the status quo, but also led to the pro-Nazi Fédération d'Action

³⁸ Nonna Mayer "The French National Front" ed *The New Politics of The Right*. 12

³⁹ Herbert Kitschelt. *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995. 95

⁴⁰ Paul Hainsworth. "The Extreme Right in Post-War France: The Emergence and Success of the National Front" in *The Extreme Right in Europe and the United States* ed. Hainsworth, Paul.. New York: St Martin's Press 1992. 48

Nationale et Européenne to break from the party,⁴¹ allowing FN to shed some of the extreme right cleavage from its party and appear more modern as a party. In the early 1990's the French centre-right worked with FN to combat the left bloc of the Parti Socialiste (PS) and Parti Communiste Français (PCF). Eventually leading to the 1984 breakthrough in the European parliamentary elections where the party won over 2 million votes, 11% of the vote share, and secured 10 seats in the European Parliament.⁴²

In the following National Assembly elections, the party received nearly 3 million votes and almost 10% of the national vote share earning the party 35 seats in the National Assembly. Though it should be noted that this was the only national election of the Fifth Republic to be held under proportional representation rules. Le Pen followed up this performance by winning 14.4% of the vote in the 1988 Presidential election. While this was a time of great growth of the party, it also showed the growing divide within the party between Conservatives and Neo-Fascists.

These two camps had been competing for power within the FN since its inception. However, at this point in the party's history the split became increasingly important. The Conservatives supported the 1978 programme and economic policy. While the neofascist supported the new track, which Le Pen began to take in the mid-late 1980s into the early 1990s, that put focus on cultural issues and opposition to the newly signed Single European Act and Maastricht Treaty of the soon to be European Union. This new direction which had been codified by the 1995 Programme. This created what would become known as the "master frame" for radical and extreme right parties. This "master frame" combined ethno-nationalism, and

⁴¹ Giles Ivaldi and Maria Lazone "The French National Front Organization: From Jean-Marie to Marine Le Pen" in *Understanding Populist Party Organization*. Ed. Heinisch, Reinhard. And Oscar Mazzoleni. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2016.

⁴² Ibid 97

Note: European Parliamentary Elections are held under Proportional Representation rules.

xenophobia with anti-globalism and anti-establishmentism.⁴³ All the while economic issues took to the periphery while these cultural issues moved to the forefront of party rhetoric.

As this transition occurred Jean-Marie Le Pen's previously unquestioned leadership started to be questioned. A rival within the party emerged for Le Pen in the form of Bruno Mégret, a former Deputy of the National Assembly for FN, and a Member of the European Parliament. He led a faction that questioned Le Pen's extremist positions and statements. During the 1980s Le Pen was able to moderate himself somewhat with the economic rhetoric, however this shift towards cultural issues also showed a darker side of Le Pen to the French public. Le Pen began making anti-Semitic comments in the public, at his rallies, and interviews. The xenophobic positions he took were also often criticized as being simply racist policies. One of the most infamous of these came in 1987, when he questioned the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust and denied French complicity in the atrocity.⁴⁴ His most infamous statement came in 1996 when he spoke at the extreme right Republican (Republikaner) party conference in Germany, he once again called the Holocaust a "detail of history."⁴⁵ This time he had his immunity from being a member of the European Parliament revoked. He was convicted in a German court for minimalizing the acts of the Holocaust and was forced to pay a fine. He was been convicted at least six times of racist or anti-Semitic remarks⁴⁶.

⁴³ Giles Ivaldi "A new Course For the French Radical Right: The National Front and de-Demonization" in *Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the Mainstream?* Edited by Tjitske Akkerman, Sarah L. de Lange, and Matthijs Rooduijn. 73-94. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. 225

⁴⁴ Le Monde, AFP, Reuters. "Jean-Marie Le Pen renvoyé devant la justice pour ses propos sur l'Occupation" *Le Monde.fr*. July 13, 2006. Via <https://web.archive.org/web/20060720121511/http://www.lemonde.fr/web/article/0,1-0@2-3224,36-794895@51-776560,0.html> (Accessed December 6 2019)

⁴⁵ Chrisafis, Angelique. "Jean-Marie Le Pen fined again for dismissing Holocaust as 'detail'" *The Guardian*. April 6, 2016. Via <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/06/jean-marie-le-pen-fined-again-dismissing-holocaust-detail> (Accessed December 6, 2016)

⁴⁶ AP Worldstream. "Le Pen convicted of inciting racial hatred for anti-Muslim remarks. *Associated Press*. April 2, 2004

This extremism led Mégret to challenge Le Pen for party leadership. When he failed to gain leadership, he left the FN. About half of all grassroots activists and aids of the Party to form Mouvement National Républicain (MNR). Though the split was traumatic for FN, the next election brought its greatest success. In the 2002 Presidential election Jean-Marie Le Pen won almost 5 million votes and 16.9% of the vote share. This result placed him second in the first round of voting, advancing him to the second round along with the incumbent President Jacques Chirac, a conservative. However, this incredible high for Le Pen and the FN, also proved to be the downfall of Jean-Marie and that era of the FN. In the second round he only received an additional 700,000 votes from what he received in the first round, losing to Chirac by over 50 points. The mainstream parties formed the “Republican Front” to compete against the National Front. The “Republican Front” was an agreement between the mainstream parties to vote against Le Pen and FN, even if it meant leftists voting for the conservative or conservatives voting for leftists at lower levels. The strategy worked and Le Pen and the FN were resoundingly defeated. This election proved to many that this was the ceiling for FN under Jean-Marie Le Pen.⁴⁷

After a relatively poor showing in 2007, where Le Pen finished fourth in the Presidential Election. The FN had its worst showing since its 1984 breakthrough. It received a lowly 4.3% of the vote in the National Assembly elections and not did not earn representation in the National Assembly. In 2009, the European Parliament elections sealed Jean-Marie’s fate as the party lost over half of its seats in the body and only received 3 seats.

In 2010, Jean-Marie Le Pen announced his retirement from party leadership, transitioning to an “Honorary President” role in the party. For the first time since the party’s founding in 1972, the party would not be led by Jean-Marie Le Pen. The party would not look far to find his

⁴⁷ Giles Ivaldi, and Maria Lazone “The French National Front Organization: From Jean-Marie to Marine Le Pen,” 142.

replacement electing his daughter, Marine Le Pen, party president. She would assume leadership January 2011. Marine was not simply a carbon copy of her father, however. While Jean-Marie always had an eye backwards toward Algeria, Marine has both eyes forward. Marine assumed leadership promising sweeping changes within the party. A process she would call “*la dédiabolisation*” or “de-demonizing” the party.

The de-demonization process began with a quite but substantial battle between Marine and Jean-Marie Le Pen. Marine attempted to remove her father from the party following another of his racist outbursts. The process of having Jean-Marie removed from the party was drawn out as he still had strong support among the old guard of the party. He was eventually removed the overwhelming majority of the party approved of his dismissal.⁴⁸ Jean-Marie went on to form *Comités Jeanne* (Jeanne Committee) in 2016 and was officially stripped of his position of Honorary President of the Front National in 2018. Even though he had effectively been out of the party since 2015. The party that which was once the party of Jean-Marie Le Pen, is now firmly the party of Marine Le Pen.

The de-demonization process was not an over-night event, rather it was a long-sustained campaign and process which is still ongoing. The process had two connected main goals. The first was to “detoxify” the party, just as Jimmie Åkesson had done with the Swedish Democrats. The party must be presented as professional and organized, while shedding the fringe and extremist aspects of the party. The second was to turn FN from a “protest” party/vote to one of electability. Marine wanted FN to not just be where voters turned to show their frustrations with the status quo in the first round of voting, but instead a party they vote for to enact policy in

⁴⁸ Ibid. 148.

Paris. One of the first aspects of the process was to promote economic issues.⁴⁹ During the early 2010s France, along with the majority of the Europe and the world as a whole, was experiencing an economic recession. The troubles included widespread unemployment, inflation, increase in taxes, and a loss of a triple-A bond rating.⁵⁰ This gave an opportunity for the FN to change course. Though economics had always been considered secondary to culture/societal issues for PRR parties, FN began to chart a new course. In the 2012 election, Marine Le Pen put her new economic plan as the center of the party platform. Marine's leftward shift in economic policy was central to her leadership campaign, while her chief rival Bruno Gollnisch promised to keep to FN's small government, economically liberal roots.⁵¹ Marine won out, taking control of the party and shifting into a new direction. The policy of Marine Le Pen and the RN will be discussed further later in the paper.

While the anti-immigration stance of the party remained the rationale for the policy that took a much different direction under Marine. Jean-Marie's positions were often simply xenophobic, and Jean-Marie made little to no attempt to hide his opinions on the matter, Marine has given the anti-immigration stance a makeover. While she had the absolute power to reform the party's position on this when she took power in 2011, she had already begun her work form within the party as far back as 2002.⁵² The first argument she makes and began to make in 2002 is that of national security. She would make the argument that the 9/11 attacks in the United States, as well as rising terrorism around the world forces France to secure or stop its

⁴⁹ Gilles Ivaldi. Towards the median economic crisis voter? The new leftist economic agenda of the Front National in France. *French Politics* 13 (4), pp.346-369. 2015. 349

⁵⁰ Gilles Ivaldi. The Successful Welfare-Chauvinist Party? The Front National in the 2012 elections in France. ESA's Research Network on Political Sociology (RN32) Mid-term conference, European Sociological Association (ESA), Nov 2012, Milano, Italy. ffhalshts-00765428f. 3

⁵¹ Ibid. 9.

⁵² Elise Saint-Martin. "Profile Analysis: The Front National: Model For The Radical Right" *University of Ottawa*. 2013 Via https://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/26189/1/St-Martin_%C3%89lise_2013_m%C3%A9moire.pdf (Accessed December 6, 2019)

immigration from letting those who would attack her from entering. In the words of Dr. Dominique Reynié, “[Marine Le Pen’s] political thought is no longer necessarily based purely on racist assertions or expressions of xenophobic contempt, but on a feigned concern with defending secularism, gender equality, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press.⁵³” In short the rhetorical reasoning of the immigration issue has shifted to a more “respectable” or “principled” stand rather than one of contempt for foreigners while the policy has remained fairly similar.

Another aspect of the dédiabolisation of the party came with the introduction of Front National “think tanks.” This was an area in which Marine had experience. In 1998 she established Générations Le Pen. Here she worked to give her father’s party an academic support center, while providing guidance to the moderation process. Before she was able to directly influence it. After taking power within FN, she helped launch the organization Club Idées Nation and several *collectifs*, to accompany Générations Le Pen.⁵⁴

2014 was also a major year for FN. By this time Marine had fully established the FN as her party and stripped her father of all influence within the party. She now worked to remove the old guard and replace them with her inner circle and a collection of young leaders who believed in the de-demonization process. In 2012, 57% percent of party positions were filled by Marine Le Pen supporters compared to 43% Jean-Marie/Bruno Gollnisch hard-liners.⁵⁵ The new Marine supporters included non-tradition far-right individuals such as Phillip Phillippot and her inner circle including Alain Jamet, Louis Aliot, and Steeve Briois. In 2014 they were joined by the youth infusion of leaders such as Marion Le Pen Maréchal (24, also Marine’s niece), David

⁵³ Dominique Reynié “‘Heritage Populism’ and France’s National Front.” *Journal of democracy*. 27, no. 4 (2016): 47–57.

⁵⁴ Ivaldi and Lazone. 149.

⁵⁵ *Ibid* 147

Rachline (26), Stéthane Ravier (44), and Nicolas Bay (37) who were all elected to the National Assembly or the Senate that year.

This new generation did not identify with the FN of Jean-Marie, but that of Marine, and were seen as professionals and legitimate politicians, not hooligans or troublemakers that the FN of old was known to run. This youth movement is something that is continuing today. This is due to various reasons. First the young generations do not equate the RN as the party of old but the new party of Marine Le Pen. Another large factor is that youth unemployment is at nearly 25% in France and has remained consistently high for many years⁵⁶ leading to a demand side factor for party growth in this demographic.

Marine Le Pen has made many symbolic changes to the party to make it appear more mainstream and “soften” the party’s image. This is in an attempt to shed the old perspective of the party. First, she often goes by the name “Marine” rather than her last name of “Le Pen” as most politicians do. This is done simple to distance herself from her father. Her style is also much more refined than her father. While Marine can get enthusiastic, especially at party rallies, the bombastic style of leadership is gone, replaced by a calm and reassuring leader. She replaced the name of the party with her own name on many ads and pamphlets, while also replacing the traditional tricolored fame of FN with a blue rose for her symbol. She has used simple language, the language of the common man not the businessman, to appeal to and appear as the everyday French(wo)man.⁵⁷ This rhetoric, in many ways, is modeled off of the success of Donald Trump’s language during his 2016 Presidential campaign in the United States. All this has been in an effort to dull the sharpened image of the party while appealing to the citizens *en masse* in France.

⁵⁶ Statista. “Youth Unemployment rate in France from 2006-2018” *Statista.com*. Via <https://www.statista.com/statistics/460548/youth-unemployment-rate-france/> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

⁵⁷ Amali Karawita. “The Persuasiveness of France’s Far Right Movement: The Case of Marine Le Pen” *Journal Kuunikasi Indonesia*. Vol 8 (1) March 2019. 81-90. 84

While focusing domestically Marine also worked internationally as well. She served as a MEP from 2004 until she resigned from her seat to take her seat in the National Assembly in 2017. During this time, she chaired ENF (Europe of Nations and Freedom) Group in the European Parliament (EP). ENF was formed from the Rassemblement Bleu National movement. This was a movement created by Marine to bring the PRR parties of Europe together and cooperate through the EP and further. Her closest ally in this movement was Geert Wilders of the PVV (Party For Freedom) in the Netherlands. This movement include The FPÖ of Austria, Vlaams Belang of Belgium, and Lega (Formerly Lega Nord) of Italy. Though many influential parties chose to align with Marine, several chose other routes. Notably the Sweden Democrats and Farage's party (UKIP and Brexit) have formed their own group with more moderate party parties. On working with FN, Farage expressed the feelings of many on the right across Europe and even within France stating "I've never said a bad word about Marine Le Pen; I've never said a good word about her party."⁵⁸ While her efforts to mainstream the party have gone a long way, many still due not trust the party itself do to its past.

The past is the simple reason for the name change of the party in 2018. Marine realized that the party name "Front National" will always be linked to her father and the hard liners of old. This was her largest attempt to mainstream the party and remake it in her image. The name change was approved by a party vote by over 80% of the vote. Marine said the name encourages other parties to "Rally" with them and is less confrontational than the old "Front."⁵⁹ The name came with controversy as it is similar to Rassemblement Nationale Populaire, the party name

⁵⁸ LBC. "The Secret Diary of Nigel Farage: Why He Thinks Marine Le Pen Is Left Wing" *LBC*. December 26, 2016 (Updated November 18, 2019) Via <https://www.lbc.co.uk/politics/parties/ukip/nigel-farage/nigel-farage-marine-le-pen-is-left-wing/> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

⁵⁹John Irish. "France's National Front renamed 'National Rally.'" *Reuters*. June 1, 2018. Via https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-politics-nationalfront/frances-national-front-renamed-national-rally-idUSKCN1IX5LU_ (Accessed December 6, 2019)

given to the collaboratist Vichy regime, and the extreme right Rassemblement National Français, which Jean-Marie Le Pen managed in the 1960s, though this was a very minor party. The reasoning this was chosen was likely two-fold. First, Marine's use of the word "Rassemblement" dates to her usage in Rassemblement Bleu Marine. Second, and perhaps more importantly, Charles de Gaulle's first political party was named Rassemblement du Peuple Français (Rally for the French People). The name change was likely intended to be a signal to the Gaullist right that the RN was the modern continuation of the Gaullist domination of the French right, and an open invitation to join. It should also be noted that party name changes are quite common on the right in France, with Les Républicains changing their name from Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) just 3 years earlier, and President Macron changing his party's name from En Marche! to La République En Marche! just a year before this change.

These changes on appearance, symbolism, and strategy have been paired with the "Marinization" of the party's policies bolstered by Marine's new rhetoric. Amidst the hardships in 2012 France, Marine borrowed from American President Barrack Obama's brand of populism, by promising a message of hope (un message d'espoir).⁶⁰ Her campaign promised a reindustrialization of France by leveling the economic playing ground between France and eastern countries such as China and India. She promised to revitalize public services and ensure all the French had access to them. The phrasing is somewhat difficult to translate, but very important to examine as it perfectly expresses the policy of welfare chauvinism in its rhetorical form. In the 2012 political programme "Oui, la France" Marine lays out her 14 points for French prosperity. The 9th point is on public services which states "I will restore the quality of public services, and make them available for all the French (Je vais restaurer des services publics de

⁶⁰ Marine Le Pen. "Oui La France" 2012. Via https://archive.org/details/EL245_P_2012_035/page/nl (Accessed November 19, 2019)

qualité, accessibles à tous les Français).⁶¹” The second half of which cements the new nativism of Marine Le Pen. She states that all the French people (à tous les Français) will have access to these services. This infers that only the ethnic French should have these privileges, as mention to the French citizens (les citoyens Français) is nowhere to be found. She also promises to “save” the French Social system for “l’Union européenne et l’immigration.”⁶² While keeping true to the previous sentiment of welfare chauvinism and nativism, she adds the aspect of Euroskepticism to her rhetoric.

The party has long been Eurosceptic, and especially anti-Euro. Marine maintains this aspect of the party. She calls for a referendum on France’s membership to the European Union.⁶³ This was her first point of the “144 Engagements” the programme on which Marine ran for President on in 2017. She called for the abandonment of the euro in favor of a new Franc, in a policy which she frames as economic liberty. The RN believe that economic and monetary policies formed at a national level better serve the people of that country. However, since the 2017 election which saw pro-EU Emmanuel Macron defeat Marine 66-34%, combined with the United Kingdom’s exit from the EU not being a smooth process and the popular opinion of the French people, Marine has made her Eurosceptic more moderate. She now vows to work with other PRR parties to remake the EU from within⁶⁴. This being a new development will be an interesting detail to follow in the new RN. SD made a similar position change earlier this decade and has seen increased support. It is not clear at this point if Marine will pull the RN to a SD-like position or return to a more traditional Eurosceptic position.

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ National Front. *144 Engagements Présidentiels: Marine 2017*. 2017. Via <https://rassemblementnational.fr/pdf/144-engagements.pdf> (Accessed December 6, 2018)

⁶⁴ TRT Staff. “Le Pen drops ‘Frexit’ in favour of an ‘EU of the far-right’” *TRT World*. April 15, 2019. Via <https://www.trtworld.com/europe/le-pen-drops-frexit-in-favour-of-an-eu-of-the-far-right-25868> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

The issue of secularism, or *Laïcité*, has also undergone transformation during the “Marinization” of the RN. Jean-Marie used Catholic themes in his rhetoric, and even partnered with Catholic organizations and fringe parties in the 1980s. Marine, while maintaining Catholic cultural rhetoric in her rhetoric, also issues a strong case for secularism which has been part of being “French” since 1905. Many claim that adherence to this position is simply thinly veiled Islamophobia. There is certainly evidence to support this claim. Marine has rallied her supporters against “Islamism” for years. Taking this issue much further than her father ever did. She infamously equated Muslims praying in public to Nazi occupation⁶⁵ and also was reprimanded by French courts for tweets depicting ISIS violence and insinuating that French Muslims pose a similar threat.⁶⁶ Marine is usually more careful in this rhetoric, but as exemplified above can veer into a controversial zone. She often criticizes Islam through the lens of *Laïcité*. Agreeing with Sarkozy’s ban on burkas in public places as they are a religious symbol. She has also stated that the *niqab* violates women’s human rights.⁶⁷ Using this rhetoric, as with the immigration issue, she has made her position more mainstream. In policy, she calls for the state to protect women’s rights by fighting “*islamisme*” by protecting the rights of women, and in the same proposal, calls for equal pay between men and women and protections for women in the workspace.⁶⁸ She also ties Islam to national security, by ensuring terrorism is always framed as Islamic fundamentalist

⁶⁵ Rishi Iyengar. “French Far-Right Politician Will Go on Trial for Comparing Muslims to Nazis” *Time*. September 23 2015. Via <https://time.com/4045803/marine-le-pen-muslims-nazis-trial/> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

⁶⁶ Reuters/AP. Marine Le Pen ordered by French court to undergo psychiatric test over anti-Islam tweets” *Australisn Broadcasting Company*. September 20, 2018. Via <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-21/marine-le-pen-court-ordered-to-undergo-psychiatric-test/10288056> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

⁶⁷ Rachel Giese. “How Marine Le Pen made a party co-founded by Nazi collaborators mainstream” *Canadian Broadcasting Company*. May 5, 2017. Via <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/day6/episode-336-sidney-crosby-s-concussion-awesome-mix-vol-2-marine-le-pen-captain-canuck-and-more-1.4099052/how-marine-le-pen-made-a-party-co-founded-by-nazi-collaborators-mainstream-1.4099073> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

⁶⁸ National Front. 144 Engagements. Point 9

terrorism. FN proposed the abolition of existing, and prevention of creating, “Islamic Fundamentalist” organizations.⁶⁹

Along with these more radical propositions RN and Marine have many proposals that are seemingly out of the Socialist/Labour party programme. Much like SD sees themselves as the protectors of the Swedish Social State, Marine has positioned RN as the French equivalent, far dispatched from the Reaganite policies of old.

Austria: The Shift Right

Perhaps the most electorally successful PRR party in Europe, The Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) also has perhaps the most interesting track to the PRR. Instead of being formed as an extreme right party and mainstreaming into the PRR, the FPÖ was founded as a unique blend of a party, mainly consisting of German nationalists and liberals. The split between the nationalist camp and the liberal camp would continue to plague, or benefit depending on your perspective, the party for nearly its entire history.

The FPÖ was officially founded in 1956 by World War II veterans and Nazi-sympathizers led by a former parliamentarian of the Nazi Reichstag and S.S. officer Anton Reinthaller.⁷⁰ Though Reinthaller had been a member of the Nazi party since 1928, his new party was not a neo-Fascist or neo-Nazi party. Instead the party was oriented around liberal ideas of limited government and *laissez-faire* economics. This has led many to say the party was the spiritual successor of the Federation of Independents, which was a party formed in 1948 by two liberal journalists who had been imprisoned by the Nazi regime, in opposition to the welfare policies of the ÖVP (Austrian People’s Party, the centre-right party of Austria) and the SPÖ (The

⁶⁹ Ibid. Point 29

⁷⁰ Heinisch, Reinhold, and Kristina Hauser. “The Mainstreaming of the Austrian Freedom Party: The More Things Change...” in *Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the Mainstream?*. Edited by Tjitske Akkerman, Sarah L. de Lange, and Matthijs Rooduijn. 73-94. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016. 73

Socialist Party of Austria, the centre-left party of Austria), which dissolved in 1955.⁷¹ While some even claim the party is the spiritual successor of the “Third Camp” of Austrian liberals which history dates back to 1848.⁷²

However, Reinthaller and his newly formed FPÖ also believed in pan-German nationalism and felt Austria and Germany should be united into one ethnic German state. Pan-Germanism had long separated the far-right from the mainstream in Austria.⁷³ Thus the FPÖ was simultaneously a liberal party and an extreme right party, giving the party an identity crisis that would play an integral part in the party’s history and development.

The FPÖ was meant with immediate success with 6.5% in the 1956 election, winning six seats in the National Council (the lower house of Austria). In 1958, former S.S. officer Friedrich Peter would become party leader after Reinthaller’s death.⁷⁴ Peter would lead the party for 20 years from 1958 to 1978. Under Peter, the party went through its first phase of mainstreaming. The party dropped pan-German nationalism in favor of Austrian nationalism (yet kept elements of German nationalism, such as support for ethnic German immigration from Eastern Europe to Austria). Peter focused the party towards economic liberalism. Here there was an opportunity for the party as the two major parties (SPÖ and ÖVP) differed little on economic, with the centre-right ÖVP actually being slightly more supportive of the welfare state than the SPÖ.⁷⁵ This shift solidified the party as a libertarian-nationalist party in the eyes of most.⁷⁶ Peter would even see

⁷¹ Heinisch, Reinhold. “The Austrian Freedom Party: Organizational Development and Leadership Change” In *Understanding Populist Party Organization: The Radical Right in Western Europe* edited by Reinhold Heinisch and Oscar Mazzoleni. 19-49. London: Macmillan Publishers, 2016. 20

⁷² Riedlsperger, Max. “The Freedom Party of Austria: From Protest to Radical Right Populism” in *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies* edited by Hans-Georg Betz. 27-45. New York, NY: St. Martins Press, 1998. 27.

⁷³ Ibid. 28.

⁷⁴ Riedlsperger. 29.

⁷⁵ Dolezal, Martin. “Austria: Transformation Driven by an Established Party.” In *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization* edited by Hanspeter Kriesi, 105-130. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 124

⁷⁶ Heinisch (2016). 21.

the FPÖ be the kingmakers of the 1970 election. Eventually Peter would agree to support an SPÖ minority government in exchange for favorable electoral reform for the FPÖ.⁷⁷ This act helped the FPÖ shed the image of being a far-right party. This trend of liberalization continued in 1973 when the FPÖ officially affiliated with Liberal International. During this time period FPÖ support steadily remained around 5.5% of the electorate. This process of liberalization upset many in the nationalist wing of the party. Spurred on by the party officially dropping pan-Germanism from the party, a group of German ultra-nationalist and neo-Nazi's led by Norbert Burger formed the National Democratic Party (NDP) in 1966.

After the 1975 elections, a story was released on Peter, in which his Nazi past was released and made the public aware of his affiliation with an S.S. unit which was involved in mass murder, though Chancellor Kreisky (SPÖ) defended Peter, the event which would be known as the Kreisky-Peter-Wiesenthal Affair would lead to Peter's resignation as party leader of the FPÖ.⁷⁸ After Alexander Götz briefly served as interim leader, Liberal Norbert Steger was elected as new party leader, though it was a close election as Steger only won 55.3% of the leadership vote against a more nationalist opponent.⁷⁹ Steger continued the liberalization of the party, declaring he wanted the FPÖ to "become the FDP of Austria."⁸⁰ (The FDP, or Free Democratic Party, being the liberal party of Germany). Steger kept the party stable and on the path that Peter had set. After the 1983 election, Steger officially brought the FPÖ into government for the first forming a coalition with the SPÖ. Though this was a high-mark for the liberal-FPÖ, it also doomed the liberal party.

⁷⁷ Heinisch and Hauser. 73.

⁷⁸ "Simon Wiesenthal." *The Guardian*. September 20, 2005. Via <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/sep/20/guardianobituaries.hellapick> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

⁷⁹ Heinisch (2016). 21.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

In 1986, under pressure from the nationalist rank-and-file of the party a leadership election was called, where the young charismatic Nationalist Carpathian Governor Jörg Haider challenged Steger for party leadership. Haider would win the election and forcing the collapse of the government as the SPÖ refused to work with Haider. Haider's election marked a sharp turn in the party. The nationalists of the party dealt a huge blow to the liberal camp. Displaying the deep division within the party. Haider would work to drift the party rightward but keep much of its liberal roots. While many PRR parties mainstream, the FPÖ radicalized.

Haider immediately changed the party's fortunes. The FPÖ reached nearly 10% of the vote in 1986, its best showing in its history and would only grow from there. Haider adapted a mass-voter seeking strategy,⁸¹ and adopted the rhetoric of populists. Haider rallied the party against immigration, taxes, and unemployment (often targeting migrant workers as the reason for Austrian unemployment).⁸²

The late-1980s into the early-1990s gave Haider and the FPÖ new rhetoric to use. Though the majority of the democratic world saw the fall of the Iron Curtain as a positive, the FPÖ expressed the fear of some Austrian workers of the consequences of the post-Soviet world. Austria was on the border of the Iron Curtain, bordering, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia (later Czechia and Slovakia). The fear of "mass immigration" from these countries was a concern that the FPÖ loudly voiced. Austria had been a homogeneous country since the fall of the Habsburg Empire, and did not view itself as a nation of immigration. By 2000, nearly 10% of the Austrian workforce would be made of foreign workers, made mostly of Yugoslavs, but included large numbers of Turks, and Hungarians⁸³. The influx of post-Soviet

⁸¹ Heinisch and Hauser. 73-74.

⁸² Rielsperger. 29.

⁸³ Dolezal 110.

immigration (or more accurately “migrant workers”) to Austria was something the country had never experienced before. Haider and the FPÖ exploited these fears in their rhetoric, promising to put harsh restrictions on immigration, migration, and asylum.

The second major opportunity the FPÖ took advantage of was the increased level of European integration. The Maastricht treaty, which created the European Union was signed in 1991. The FPÖ expressed their opposition to the European project and took a hardline Eurosceptic position in the early Haider years. Once again the immigration issue was used, but also the fear of the loss of Austrian jobs to members of the new EU, and especially the issue of national sovereignty was expressed by the creation of new supranational institutions and institutional powers of the EU along with the objection to the Euro. The ÖVP and SPÖ both were strong supporters of European integration, allowing the FPÖ to stand out by taking a Eurosceptic position. In the campaign to ratify the Maastricht Treaty only three Austrian groups vocally objected to the treaty, led by Haider and the FPÖ, the Green Party, and farmer’s interest groups joined, but Austria did ratify the treaty and join the EU.

Haider also gained infamy during this time-period. He was always a controversial figure due to his nationalist sentiment and populist rhetoric. His parents were members of the Nazi Youth, and he did not distance himself from them or the organization. He made several inflammatory comments that made headlines during this time. He referred to Austria as a “singular ideological miscarriage⁸⁴” harkening back to the par-Germanism of the party’s roots. While responding to an SPÖ MP’s criticism of his work-for-welfare policy he stated, “at least in the Third Reich there was a decent employment policy, which is more than can be said for what your government in Vienna can manage.⁸⁵” This quote led to the ÖVP collapsing Haider’s

⁸⁴ Reilsperger. 31.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 39

Carpathian government, in favor of a grand ÖVP-SPÖ coalition and an ÖVP governor. Though during this time the FPÖ radicalized, its parliamentary representation/candidates remained mainly composed of moderates and liberals. Many of these individuals, frustrated with Haider and the new direction of the party broke away from the party to form the new Liberal Forum in 1993, the Liberal Forum took the FPÖ's position in Liberal International and the FPÖ officially broke all ties with the organization in the same year.

Through the mid-to-late 1990s Haider changed course slightly, attempting to effect policy, not just receive votes. He and ÖVP leader Erhard Busek began negotiations on what a future ÖVP-FPÖ coalition would look like. Busek, and successor Wolfgang Schüssel, gave Haider ultimatums on policy. These ultimatums included support for Austria corporatism, supporting European integration, and the condemnation of and distancing from Nazism.⁸⁶ Haider complied, and the 1999 election brought the FPÖ its greatest success yet. The party finished second in the election, beating the ÖVP by 415 votes⁸⁷. Haider offered the Prime Ministership to the ÖVP and the two parties quickly assembled a coalition. The EU sanctioned the new Austrian government for the inclusion of the far right, but in the end this amounted to little more than a few boycotted meeting and withheld handshakes. In 2000, Haider stepped down as party leader in favor of Susanne Reiss-Passer, though this was a transition of power on paper only as Haider still ran the party. It is possible this was Haider's attempt to follow the "one foot in, one foot out" strategy the PRR parties of Nordic Europe employ. Under this strategy the Party, or individual, attempts to influence policy due to their governmental importance, but refuse to make official coalitions in the attempt to retain "outsider" appeal. It is possible he saw the electoral writing on the wall as government was a failure for the FPÖ electorally and wished

⁸⁶ Heinisch and Hauser 75.

⁸⁷ Ibid. 76

to distance himself from it, and it is possible he simply wanted to be seen as “playing within the rules” as he was once again governor of Carpathia and focused on this role (again on paper).

The 2002 election was a catastrophic failure for the FPÖ. The party dropped nearly 17 points in the polls, and lost 34 seats in the National Council, though the gains by the ÖVP allowed the right-wing government coalition to be renewed, albeit with much less power in the government. Haider returned to his leadership position after the election. However, the rank-and-file was once again frustrated. The party’s electoral downturn played a role in this, but Haider’s positions also did. Haider’s policy-seeking strategy adapted after the 1999 election did not sit well with many in the party who felt he was abandoning the nationalist and populist wings of the party. These wings now looked to the head of the Vienna branch of the party, Heinz-Christian Strache, was the man looked to as Haider’s replacement. Sensing this impending challenge, Haider left the FPÖ along with the rest of his government team, and the Carpathian branch of the FPÖ to form the Alliance For Austria’s Future (BZÖ). Strache took control of the party after this and left government to join the opposition, while Haider’s BZÖ remained with the ÖVP in government.

While Haider drifted to the right, while placating the liberals within the party, Strache bolted to the far. Haider attempted to moderate his, and his candidates, rhetoric, Strache adopted the language of the PRR almost immediately. Strache always attempted to frame his arguments through a cultural lens and relied heavily on traditional German values as the cornerstone of his message.⁸⁸ Haider adapted the rhetoric of populism and shift right, his core beliefs on government remained liberal. He called for lowering taxes, minimizing government, and maximizing privatization. And while the call for plebeian democracy was officially dropped

⁸⁸ Rielsperger. 32.

from the party platform to placate the ÖVP, it was still very much a part of Haider's governmental goals. Strache has undergone his own "Marinization" of the party. Though Marine Le Pen's push was to detoxify her party, Strache has reoriented his party. While liberal aspects of the party are still there, such as the call for a 700 million euro tax cut and the call to push for direct democracy has once again entered the programme.⁸⁹ The programme has also turned radically to the right calling for regulated capitalism, supporting the current Austrian welfare state, and taking anti-Islamism stances.⁹⁰ In this regard while the FPÖ was once an outlier of the PRR it has drifted towards the core of the parties such as SD, RN, and away from its more liberal roots. This perhaps indicating that Strache wished to end the nationalist-liberal split within the party by solidifying the party as a Nationalist PRR party.

Strache led a rebound of the party, outperforming the BZÖ in every National election both parties contested. He even managed to equal Haider's 1999 success. In 2017, Strache led the party receive 26% of the vote and 51 seats in the council. Sebastian Kurz, the new leader of the ÖVP, quickly formed a coalition with the FPÖ. However, like the 1999 Governmental experiences, this ended up being catastrophic for the FPÖ. In 2019, Strache was caught on camera negotiating with the "niece" of a Russian oligarch trading financial support of the FPÖ by the Russian for governmental contracts.⁹¹

⁸⁹ <https://www.fpo.e.at/wahlprogramm-nrw-2019/mit-sicherheit-fuer-oesterreich-fair-sozial-heimattreu/>

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Bell, Bethany. "Austrian scandal: Mystery of the honey-trap video" BBC.com. April 24, 2019 (Accessed Nov 17, 2019) via <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-48378320>

Austrian Federal Elections 1956-2019																				
Party	1956	1959	1962	1966	1970	1971*	1975	1979	1983	1986	1990	1994	1995	1999	2002	2006	2008	2013	2017	2019
ÖVP	46%(82)	44.2%(79)	45.4%(81)	45.43%(85)	44.7%(78)	43.1%(80)	42.9%(80)	41.9%(77)	43.2%(81)	41.3%(77)	41.3%(60)	27.7%(52)	28.3%(52)	26.9%(52)	42.3%(79)	42.3%(66)	25.98%(51)	24%(47)	31.5%(62)	37.5%(71)*
SPÖ	43%(74)	44.8%(78)	44%(76)	42.6%(74)	48.4%(81)	50%(93)	50.4%(93)	51%(95)	47.65%(90)	43.1%(80)	43.1%(80)	34.9%(65)	38.1%(71)	33.2%(65)	36.5%(69)	36.51(68)	29.6%(57)	26.8%(52)	26.9%(52)	21.2%(40)
FPÖ	6.5%(6)	7.7%(8)	7%(8)	5.4%(6)	5.5%(6)	5.5%(10)	5.4%(10)	6.1%(11)	4.98%(12)	9.7%(18)	16.6%(33)	22.5%(42)	21.9%(41)	26.9%(52)	10%(18)	11%(21)	17.5%(34)	20.5%(40)	26%(51)	16.2%(31)*
BZÖ	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4.1%(7)	10.7%(21)	3.5%(0)	---	0.1%(0)
Lib Forum/NEOS	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	6%(11)	5.5%(10)	3.6%(0)	1%(0)	---	---	2.1%(0)	4.96%(9)	5.3%(10)	8.1%(15)
KPO	4.4%(3)	3.3%(0)	3%(0)	4%(0)	1%(0)	1.4%(0)	1.2%(0)	1.0%(0)	7%(0)	7%(0)	5%(0)	2%(0)	3%(0)	5%(0)	6%(0)	1.1%(0)	76%(0)	1%(0)	8%(0)	7%(0)
Greens	---	--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4.8%(8)	4.8%(10)	7.3%(13)	4.8%(9)	7.4%(14)	9.5%(17)	11%(21)	10.4%(21)	12.4%(24)	3.8%(0)	13.9%(26)
*Electoral Reform, 92 seats now needed for majority instead of 83																				

*Electoral Reform, 92 seats now needed for majority instead of 83

This chart shown the electoral support for all parties represented in the National Council since the FPÖ's foundation with the amount of seat the party received being in parentheses.
Data accumulated via The Austrian Interior Ministry

When this video, which soon became known as the "Ibiza Affair", it caused the government to collapse and Chancellor Kurtz to call for snap elections. Strache resigned from leadership due to

this incident and was replaced by popular former Presidential candidate Norbert Hofer. The 2019 election saw the FPÖ lose nearly 10% of its vote share and 20 seats in the National Council. Kurz's ÖVP once again came out on top but is attempting to form a coalition without the FPÖ. AT the time of writing no government has been formed but the ÖVP and the Greens have entered into coalition negotiations.⁹² The future of the FPÖ is uncertain after the Ibiza Affair. It appears as if the FPÖ has cemented itself as a PRR with liberal sympathies, rather than the reverse it once held. In the time between now and the next election a lot will be learned about the next phase of the FPÖ. While Hofer mainly adapted Strache's programme for the 2019 election. This was on very short notice which limited Hofer's options. The party could once again face radical change under Hofer to distance itself from Strache and the Ibiza Affair. The party might also stay its ideological course as Hofer and Strache had long been allies within the party, and it had seen success under Strache.

The FPÖ was traditionally organized as fairly decentralized body. It had a national branch, headed by the party congress. It is the highest authority within the party, which oversaw state branches. These state branches then had decentralized further into local branches. While the branch always had to answer to that above them, they also enjoyed much more autonomy than many PRR have, especially compared to Le Pen's model. However, the national level does hold much more power after Haider's 1998 reforms. These reforms strengthened the party's centralization, giving the party hierarchy power to veto lower branches actions and decisions. After these reforms party candidates were jointly selected by the party congress and the local party. It also gave the Party leader the ability to remove any candidate at any level from the

⁹² "Austria's conservatives and greens enter coalition talks" *The Local*. November 11, 2019. Via <https://www.thelocal.at/20191111/austrias-conservatives-and-greens-enter-coalition-talks> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

party's ballot. Haider used this power quite regularly to ensure moderates and more liberal minded candidates were on the ballot. While Strache has rarely used the power not wishing to upset the ran-and-file.⁹³ The state party also has a considerable amount of soft power over local parties as between 50 and 63% of local party funding comes directly from the state party⁹⁴.

Membership for the party is also unique. While the ÖVP and SPÖ have mandatory membership, and often have party aligned unions, membership to the FPÖ is completely voluntary. Membership peaked in 2000, with 51,296 dues paying members.⁹⁵ Due to the party's belief in plebian democracy, its members have much more power comparative to other parties. Leaders are elected by all members rather than the party elite. This has led to the party removing leaders who have been popular with party elite, most notably in 1986.

The current party policy is uncertain due to the recent leadership change. The FPÖ boasts governmental implementation of its policy positions. This is due to its support of, or involvement in governmental. The first success came in 1970, when it tolerated an SPÖ government in return for an electoral reform. The reform would benefit the party by giving increased proportional representation to smaller parties. This reform resulted in an additional 4 seats for the FPÖ in the next election, though its vote share remained steady at 5.5%.⁹⁶ Some other major victories for the FPÖ include the (re)introduction of student and hospital fees along with the general liberalization and privatization of the Austrian economy during the early 1980s. In the early 2000s, the party was able to pass laws that tightened libel laws in the country and set a hard cap on the amount of foreign-born workers allowed within the country at 10% (after reduced to 9%).⁹⁷ Both showing

⁹³ Heinisch (1). 27.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 35

⁹⁵ Heinisch (1). 25.

⁹⁶ Heinisch and Hauser 73.

⁹⁷ Heinisch and Hauser, 75-77

victories for the party and its rightward shift throughout the years. The 2011 programme is intentionally vague on policy,⁹⁸ and Hofer is yet to roll out his own party programme. Therefore, it is much more difficult to analyze the policy of the FPÖ than that of the RN or SD for comparison. Though recent trends suggest the party is becoming more aligned with these two parties rather than its more liberal roots. Once a member of Liberal International, the FPÖ now sits with the Le Pen led Identity and Democracy group (and its predecessor Europe of Nations and Freedom) in the EP since 2005 when Strache took control of the party. Before 2005 the Party never sat with an EP group.⁹⁹

Response of the Mainstream

The mainstream parties, especially those of the centre-right, face a dilemma when PRR parties emerge. The dilemma revolves around a simple question with a sometimes-complicated answer; how to respond to the PRR? There are three distinct categories of action, Matt Golder called these three strategies dismissive, accommodative, and adversarial.¹⁰⁰ In the following section I will use these categories as a baseline to build upon the three major strategies of the mainstream parties. As previously mentioned, I have identified as cooption, cohabitation, and coercion.

The first category I will explore is coercion. This occurs when mainstream parties refuse to work with PRR party or acknowledge the legitimacy of the party. They often even question the legitimacy of the issues they raise. This strategy can also include working with other established parties to keep the PRR on the fringe of politics. This is the most popular strategy employed by the centre-right to these parties. It can be a very effective strategy, but it can also backfire tremendously. For its effectiveness we can look at the example of France. Since the

⁹⁸ Ibid. 81.

⁹⁹ Identity and Democracy “Member Parties.” *Identity and Democracy*. <https://www.id-party.eu/> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

¹⁰⁰ Golder. 488.

1990s there has largely been a so-called *cordon sanitaire* placed on the FN/RN. Though some members of the UMP (former French centre right party, Union pour un mouvement populaire) attempted to work with the FN at a local level, they were quickly sacked by the national party.¹⁰¹ The electoral system in France helped aid this policy. In the first round voters often “vote with their heart” while in the second they “vote with their head.”¹⁰² In practical terms this meant that voters of the centre/centre right could vote for the party they preferred in the first round, and if FN advanced to the second round they could vote against FN, often encouraged by the major parties.

This perhaps best exemplified by the second round of the 2002. When Jean-Marie Le Pen of the Front National advanced to the second round of the Presidential election against centre right Jacques Chirac of the RPR (Rassemblement pour la République). The left, centre, centre right alike mobilized the so-called “Front Republican”¹⁰³ to rally voters against the FN and Le Pen. In this case the policy was successful, Le Pen was defeated, FN failed to make gains in the National Assembly and failed to even qualify for the 2nd round in following (2007) election. This strategy had been employed against the FN since the mid-1980s. While it did give Le Pen added rhetoric, as he began to call the established parties the “gang of four” (in reference to PCF, PS, UDF, and RPR). He was never able to translate this into true electoral success though it did cement FN as the protest party.

¹⁰¹ Ivaldi, Gilles and Jocelyn Evans. *The 2012 French Presidential Elections: The Inevitable Alternation* Palgrave Macmillan UK. 2013. Chapter 2.

¹⁰² Blais, André, Simon Labbé-St-Vincent, Jean-François Laslier, Nicolas Sauger, and Karine Van Der Straeten. "Strategic Vote Choice in One-round and Two-round Elections: An Experimental Study." *Political Research Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (2011): 637-45.

¹⁰³ Ivaldi, Gilles and Jocelyn Evans. *The 2012 French Presidential Elections: The Inevitable Alternation* Palgrave Macmillan UK. 2013.

The SD has also faced a coercive strategy from their electoral opponents. The *cordon sanitaire* on SD has been in effect from all mainstream parties since the party's founding.¹⁰⁴ With SD this even expanded into the issues that they championed as immigration and issues revolving around immigration were considered issues out of the mainstream and not to be acknowledged by the mainstream parties.¹⁰⁵ While SD was a minor party this policy was effective. However, after the party's electoral breakthrough 2010 this policy of coercion started to backfire on the mainstream parties. SD solidified its ownership of the issues that the major parties refused to recognize, and when the Syrian refugee crisis of 2015 thrust the immigration debate into the mainstream. No established party could challenge SD's monopoly on the issue. It also gave SD the appearance of the outsider to the people, which boasted the populist rhetoric of the party with the "political elites" of the mainstream parties working together against the SD. Now the SD is the 3rd largest party in the Riksdag and many polls have them leading for the next election.¹⁰⁶

The contradiction in outcomes of coercion for SD and FN shows the flaw of the strategy. It can follow the law of diminishing returns. Meaning, while ignoring or taking a contentious stance against small parties and highly controversial individuals can be advantageous for mainstream parties. But once the small party has started its mainstreaming process and has a "moderate" leader the tactic becomes less effective. As exemplified by SD, not only can the policy become less advantageous, it can in fact strengthen the PRR party by giving it complete ownership of issues. The strategy of coercion proves the rhetoric of the PRR parties, that the elites are working against them (and therefore the people in their rhetoric), true therefore

¹⁰⁴ Sweden Democrats in Understanding Populist Party Organizations. 190

¹⁰⁵ Board, Joseph. *The Government and Politics of Sweden*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970. 87

¹⁰⁶ Frick, Chang "Nytt SD-rekord i Sentio – Konservativa blocket får 191 mandat när L kollapsar". *Nyheter Idag*. November 20, 2019.

granting the party further populist legitimacy. Coercion is the most logical position for the mainstream parties to take, especially against small parties. Once the PRR experiences its breakthrough mainstream parties must employ this strategy with caution not to help inadvertently the PRR party grow electorally.

The second major strategy that the mainstream party can employ is that of cooption. This strategy involves the established party (usually the centre-right). This strategy occurs when the establishment party attempts to either take outright or at least challenge a PRR's ownership of a specific policy(policies). The best example of this strategy being employed to the success of the mainstream party comes from the United Kingdom. The UK Independence Party led by Nigel Farage had made significant gains in UK politics. In the 2010 election, 3% of the electorate had voted UKIP. In the 2014 EU elections UKIP surpassed the Conservative party, and in fact all parties by winning 26.6% of the vote. UKIP was on the path to make huge gains in vote share in the 2015 election, though the first-past-the-post electoral system would make it more difficult to gain seats. Worried about UKIP's popularity Conservative PM David Cameron attempted to thwart UKIP gains by taking the initiative on UKIP's main (and arguably only) issue, UK membership to the EU by promising the people an "in/out" referendum on UK membership in the EU if the Conservatives remained in government after the 2015 election.¹⁰⁷ While UKIP made incredible gains in 2015, receiving over 12% of the vote due to the first-past-the-post electoral system this only translated to one seat. While the Conservatives were split during the Brexit campaign, once the people voted leave, since it was under a Conservative government, it became a cornerstone of Conservative policy. Current PM Boris Johnson won his leadership election and is currently the heavy favorite to win the 2019 general election, by promising to "get

¹⁰⁷ "David Cameron promises in/out referendum on EU" *British Broadcasting Company*. January 23, 2013. Via <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-21148282> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

Brexit done.¹⁰⁸ Since the Brexit vote, UKIP has not won a seat in Parliament and plummeted 21% in the EU elections. It must be noted that Farage stepped down from leadership following the 2015 General Election. He would form the new Brexit Party in 2019 (which won the European elections) which influenced the failure of UKIP. However, the Conservative party taking ownership of the Brexit issue is the most important factor in the fall of UKIP.

This strategy is best employed by the mainstream party as the PRR party is poised for an electoral breakthrough. Before this time, it is best, for the mainstream party, to employ a strategy of coercion. However, once the PRR party becomes too big to simply ignore it is best to challenge the issue ownership the PRR would enjoy if the policy of coercion would be continued. Sometimes, this is not possible as the issue is too far away from the mainstream, is not ideologically consistent for the mainstream party, or opposed by the party (at either the elite party level or the grassroots level).

The final strategy that can be employed is that of cooption. This strategy involves the mainstream party working with the PRR party. This can take form via an electoral alliance or a government coalition. Traditionally, mainstream parties have avoided this strategy, and as previously mentioned, even disciplined party members, or local parties for working with PRR parties. Austria has the most experience in this strategy. The ÖVP has twice formed a coalition with the FPÖ. Before the first coalition in 1999 the ÖVP gave Haider and the FPÖ preconditions they must meet in order to form a coalition. These conditions were intended to be put external pressure on the party to moderate to become a legitimate coalition partner for the ÖVP. In any ways this was successful for the ÖVP. Haider moderated his party and rhetoric, as he desired to be in government, though as mentioned earlier this drive for governance over the more radical

¹⁰⁸ Conservative and Unionist Party. "Our Plan: Conservative Manifesto 2019" *Conservative and Unionist Party*. Via <https://vote.conservatives.com/our-plan> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

policies eventually led to the FPÖ-BZÖ split. This split could be seen as a victory for the ÖVP as well as it split the far-right vote and gave the ÖVP a legitimate coalition partner in the BZÖ.

Both governmental experiences for the FPÖ ended up being catastrophic for the party. After the 1999 coalition the FPÖ fell more than 15% in the 2002 elections. After the 2017 coalition the party fell about 10% in the following 2019 election. After both of these coalitions the ÖVP was able to increase their vote share and maintain control of the government. Using the Austrian case as an example it appears that cooption may be a beneficial strategy to the centre-right, and may hurt the PRR. This being the case it may be beneficial to the PRR to avoid coalitions until they hold the power to be the senior members.

When the Populist Radical Right fails

While the PRR has been on the rise across western Europe, these parties are not always successful. In this section I will discuss several major reasons why PRR parties fail. One of the most disappointing types of PRR parties (for their supporters) are flash parties. Flash parties are those that seemingly come out of nowhere to win an electoral victory. This usually in their first contested election. Examples of flash parties include New Democracy (Sweden), Team Stronach (Austria), and Pim Fortuyn List (Netherlands). To understand why these flash parties fail we must look into these parties as examples.

Pim Fortuyn List (LPF) was founded by eccentric PRR politician Pim Fortuyn. Fortuyn was an extremely popular academic and author who campaigned on an anti-Islam, socially progressive platform, and campaigned against the politics of consensus that dominated post-Cold War Netherlands.¹⁰⁹ The reason for this party's failure is simple. LPF as the name suggests was a party based on the cult of personality of Pim Fortuyn. When Fortuyn was murdered during the

¹⁰⁹ Buruma, Ian. *Murder in Amsterdam: Liberal Europe, Islam and the Limits of Tolerance*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2007. 47-49

2002 election,¹¹⁰ the party's *raison d'être* died with him. The party received 17% of the vote following his murder and joined a governing coalition. Unlike many flash parties this was not the only election in which the party gained representation. The government collapsed in 2003 and new elections were called, still largely running off of Fortuyn's memory. The party managed to receive 5.7% of the vote, but by the 2006 election the party failed to reach .5%¹¹¹ of the vote and never contested an election again, officially dissolving in 2008. By the time the party officially folded the majority of its supporters had joined Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom¹¹² (PVV).

We can learn several important lessons from LPF. First, a party built around a cult of personality can only live with its leader. The BZÖ in Austria met a similar end after the death of Jörg Haider. This can be averted by having a strong deputy leader ready to replace the incumbent, and seemingly must be handed the reins to the party. The FN could have been considered a party centered around Jean-Marie Le Pen, but he was able to transfer leadership to Marine Le Pen fairly easily. The FN then became a party based around Marine. This situation could have been considered special as Marine was Jean-Marie's daughter, but it was the clear "passing of the torch" from Jean-Marie to Marine that continued the relative success of FN. Another way to counter-act this phenomenon of a larger than life leader can be seen by the FPÖ in Austria. When Haider left the party, Strache was immediately able to take the party, and while there was an initial short downturn in electoral success (likely due to having to compete with Haider for its vote share) the FPÖ remained a force in Austrian politics. Strache was the leader-in-waiting like Marine was for the FN, however due to the circumstances, the FPÖ was aided by the fact it is an "established" populist party. Meaning it had a strong party organization to rely

¹¹⁰ Ibid 40.

¹¹¹ All Dutch election numbers are from <http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/netherlands.html>

¹¹² Mudde. 2007. 213.

on. Even though Haider took the entire Carinthian state organization and his government team with him to the BZÖ, the party had the organizational strength and stability to be able to carry on.

Many of the issues that LPF experienced were experienced by other parties as well. With the example of NyD we can also see the importance of organizational party strength and the importance of leadership. While NyD's founders were popular and well-established public figures, neither Wachtmeister or Karlsson had political experience. This lack in experience was evident as the party evolved, or rather didn't evolve. NyD did not build a strong organizational base. It virtually ignored local elections and refused to let local parties exist practically.¹¹³ The party elites worried that those from the far right or extreme right would use the local parties to run and eventually hijack the party. Why this fear is reasonable, other parties have taken organizational steps to prevent this. For example, the leader of the FPÖ has the power to remove any FPÖ candidate from the party. The decision to make NyD a purely national party staggered its growth. The local parties were not able to make connections with locals who may have become volunteers or even candidates. The relationship between party and people became harder to achieve. Meaning party loyalty is not maximized. Success in local elections and local election also give the party legitimacy. New parties, and especially new PRR parties, lack the legitimacy that the established parties possess. Legitimacy can be acquired many ways, via the leadership's connection with the people, accepting the "rules of the game" of politics and playing within them, and establishing personal relationships between the party officials and individual are just a few of these possibilities. However, the act which probably goes the furthest in building legitimacy is governing successfully. While it is difficult for PRR parties to govern on a national

¹¹³ Svård. 82.

level, breakthroughs at the local level can provide this opportunity to gain experience in governing. Even if the party does not achieve much in government, it can prove to be a “legitimate” party by governing without massive failure, or failure that mainstream parties could also be seen as having whilst maintaining stability.

This lack of organizational depth also prevented the rise of new figures in the party. Åkesson made his name as a youth party leader before leading SD, Haider ran the Carinthian branch of the FPÖ before taking control of the party, and Strache ran the Vienna branch before ascending to party leadership. These local party branches not only contest local elections but provide the party and opportunity to identify potential leaders for the party moving forward and give them experience they need to be successful running the national party. NyD failed because once Wachtmeister and Karlsson stepped away from the party the party had lost its public figures, and these two men failed to build a party structure or a leader that could succeed them.

“Splinter parties” have also proven to be largely unsuccessful as a model for the PRR. The most successful of the splinter parties was Jörg Haider’s BZÖ. Haider left the FPÖ, which he was the leader of, to form the BZÖ in 2005. Haider had many advantages in forming his splinter party. He was the “cult of personality” that the FPÖ was associated with before he left. He was in a governmental coalition when he split and took the entire governing team (all parliamentary members of the FPÖ who held government ministries) and was able to continue in government coalition with the ÖVP. Organizationally he took the entire Carinthian branch of the FPÖ with him to the BZÖ and had many other party officials defect to his new party. Even with all these advantages Haider barely snuck into the National Council after the 2006 election with 4.11% of the compared to the FPÖ’s 11%. After this setback the BZÖ was able to win 7% in the 2008 election, but the FPÖ was able to secure 17.5%. After Haider’s 2008 death, the BZÖ

was unable to continue as a national party without him. The party continued to have elected members in Carinthia until 2017¹¹⁴, whereas the FPÖ was increasing their vote share without him.

The relative failure of the BZÖ compared to the FPÖ is an example of the successful mainstreaming of the FPÖ. The party was able to handle its leader of 20 years leaving the party. Along with many party leaders and an entire state party because it had built itself as if it were the ÖVP, Republicans, or the Moderates. By building the party as if it were a mainstream party, in stark contrast to what NyD had done. The FPÖ was able to grow the leaders it needed from within and maintain its structural strength after the split. It also had experience facing a party split, the NDP had split in 1966 (without success) from the party's right/nationalist wing and in 1993 Liberal Forum split (with moderate success) from the party's liberal/moderate wing. These experiences might have strengthened the party by giving those within the party experience in coping with splinter groups when Haider left. The FPÖ and the BZÖ were both aided by the fact Haider's BZÖ took a more liberal position. The FPÖ held ownership of many of the more rightward issues such as immigration. While the Liberal Forum has fallen out of the National Council by this time opening up space for a Liberal party in the national discourse that the BZÖ could slide into until Haider's untimely death in an auto accident.

Even under these near ideal circumstances for a splinter party it eventually became another failed attempt at a PRR party. The largest advantage the BZÖ may have encountered was that it could fill a more liberal position in politics. Splinter parties (from PRR parties) often compete with the original party for the same voters in the same bloc of the political spectrum.

¹¹⁴ "The BZÖ loses last MP in a state parliament" *Der Standard*. July 20, 2017. Via <https://apps.derstandard.at/privacywall/2000061544029/Das-BZOe-verliert-letzte-Abgeordnete-in-einem-Landtag> (Accessed December 6, 2019)

Perhaps the best example of this being the MNR of France led by Bruno Mégret, Jean-Marie Le Pen's former "number two" (or *délégué* general) in the FN. Mégret grew frustrated with Le Pen, splintered to form the MNR in 1998. His aim was to present many of the same issues and policy as the FN, but in a less toxic or controversial way than Le Pen himself. In many ways he tried to start what would later become the "Marinization" process 10 years early. However, while Marine worked within the established party, Mégret instead chose to break completely from Le Pen and the FN. With him he took about half of the party organization with him.¹¹⁵ This calculated risk turned out to be a failure. While Marine would prove his theory of the FN needing a more moderate tone and a break from Jean-Marie true. However, the MNR attempt to compete with FN on the same issues was a mistake. In France, the issues of immigration, Euroscepticism, and anti-Islamism are issues completely owned by and tied with FN and the Le Pen name. MNR was unable to challenge FN for ownership of these issues and would ultimately prove to be little competition for the FN, and Jean-Marie Le Pen would see his best result in the 2002 election, the first election after MNR's split from the party. While today MNR is able to differentiate itself from the RN as an economically liberal party, the FN under Jean-Marie was still largely pro-free market liberalism so the MNR was unable to cement themselves as a national liberal opponent of a Populist Radical Right FN, and effectively ceased operations in 2008 before Marine solidified the RN in the policies of socialist/Christian Democratic economic policy, abandoning the FN's Thatcherite, neo-liberal roots.

Ownership of the core PRR issues is a key to electoral success. As mentioned, splinter parties cannot successfully challenge established PRR parties on these issues. However, they can take more radical positions such as ND from the SD or the NDP from the FPÖ, to attempt to

¹¹⁵ Ivaldi and Lazone.135

challenge the, from the right. Challenging the PRR party from the centre or more moderate position of the PRR party is also possible, as the BZÖ attempted, but usually attempted by the mainstream parties. If the mainstream party successfully takes ownership of the issue from the centre or from the right, the PRR will suffer. This occurs when the mainstream party take the strategy of cooption. As previously mentioned, the Tories decimated UKIP by taking ownership of the Brexit Issue. This has happened in many other countries as well. The ÖVP, especially under Sebastain Kurtz's leadership, has drifted towards the right and attempted to challenge the FPO on any issues, most notably on immigration. While the FPÖ was still very successful during this time period, the OVP also became even more successful, aided by the Ibiza Affair, the ÖVP received the highest vote share any party in Austria had received since 2006 in the 2019 elections. François Fillon attempted to drift LR (in France) to the right around the same time as Kurz rose in Austria. However, he was unsuccessful in challenging FN's dominance on cultural issues, and failed to surpass FN in the Presidential election, or even make the second round. Though in Fillon's case it should be noted he was also fighting a personal scandal the so-called "Penelope-gate," during the election which could have had a significant impact on the effectiveness of his efforts to challenge FN.

CONCLUSION

In 2005 Jen Rydgren stated that during the 1980s the FN established "the new master frame known as *a successful frame*¹¹⁶" for the PRR for electoral success. While the RN remains an incredibly successful party that many other parties look to for guidance, the master-frame created by Jean-Marie Le Pen is no longer the framework which the PRR use. Many would argue that the RN is still the framework party that the leads the PRR of Europe. In this they would be

¹¹⁶ Rydgren (2005). 416.

correct, however, the “Marinization” of the RN was modeled off of the “Åkessonization” of the Sweden Democrats.

Through my research I have found that the Sweden Democrats can be used as the new model for a successful PRR party. While RN is a more historic party, and much more renowned of a party, SD has paved the way for the new generation of the PRR. This being said, the new model of success for the PRR can be expressed using RN as an example of the new model.

The new model of success follows the following path. If the party has a history of extremism, such as SD’s connections with the Nordic Reich Movement, to optimize future success it should not have electoral success, at least at the national level, until the “mainstreamization” process has begun. While one may argue that a party like the FPÖ proves this theory wrong, it is important to note that the FPÖ did not begin as an extremist party but as a liberal party. While the party remains small, it should follow SD’s path of mainstreamization. By accepting the rule of law and stripping neo-Nazi/neo-Fascist elements from the party. This must be an emphatic and ongoing part of the party. Again, using SD as an example, they began banning uniforms and expelling extremists from the party in the late 1990s but as recently as this year has continued ensuring his party does not have extremists representing the party. During the beginning stages of the party it is important to build the party organization.

Party organization is a critical point for success. The party must begin building up its organizational strength as soon as possible to maintain party stability. If there is a solid structure to the party it will be able to endure electoral setbacks, such as the FPÖ in the 2002 elections, as well as major breaks in the party, such as a party leader leaving as Haider did in 2005 or as Mégret did in 1999. By building a strong party structure, the party also develops the ability to grow potential leaders in the party. Jimmie Åkesson came from the Youth Wing of SD and

Strache rose through the ranks of the Vienna branch of the FPÖ before assuming party leadership. Having these leaders within the party ensures stability within the party for the future. When Nigel Farage stepped down from UKIP leadership, there was no clear replacement for him as party leader, and the party virtually disappeared after his departure. Conversely, FN, SD, and FPÖ were all able to quickly replace party leaders from within to maintain, or even improve, party support.

Having local party affiliates is also extremely important to PRR party development. These local parties can often win elections much easier, or at least earlier, than the national party. Having these local parties will increase party loyalty among voters, as they will see the party attempting to make an impact locally. The party also builds legitimacy by contesting local elections in a democratic fashion, especially if they are able to take control of local councils or other local positions. NyD can serve as a warning to other parties of the pitfalls of not maintaining local parties, NyD ignored the local levels and did not grow the leaders they needed to maintain the party, or have an electoral base built among the people. RN has managed to build a base of voters in southern France due to the party's effectiveness at the local level in these regions.

While the local parties are extremely important the party must be at least somewhat centralized. The local and national parties must share the same rhetoric and goals to maintain continuity between the two. The party leader, or party congress, must also hold supremacy above the local parties. It must do this to ensure continuity, but perhaps more importantly keep extremists from becoming candidates or voices to the party. Åkesson, Haider, and Marine Le Pen have all used their positions to expel extremists from their parties.

The need to expel extremists bleeds into the next portion of the new model. The party must cultivate a moderate image. This applies from the leader down to the rank-and-file. The antics of leaders like Jean-Marie Le Pen effectively cap the support the party can receive. The leader, and party candidates must appear professional, clean-cut, and presentable. This is perhaps the most important part of the mainstreaming of the party. It must appear as the same mainstream parties they rally against. The leader must be charismatic, but not have the aura of a fascist cult of personality, as this will dissuade many from supporting the party. Åkesson is a perfect example of this leader. While extremely charismatic, he does not appear as a “larger than life” personality. Instead he appears as a professional who can relate to the people at large. While leaders must appear passionate, they also must remain calm, collected, and civil especially when interacting with leaders from other parties. Åkesson has even managed to join the ECR group in the EP, instead of sitting with the traditional far-right/PRR group to cement SD’s moderated position.

Issue ownership is also extremely important to PRR parties. The party must keep ownership of their key issue, which is usually immigration. If the party surrenders ownership of this issue they will fail to be a successful party. An example failure to keep ownership of an issue again is UKIP. Many now call Brexit a “Tory Brexit.” In any ways Boris Johnson and the Conservative party now hold ownership of the Brexit issue and, as previously mentioned, UKIP is no longer a major contributor to British politics and is one again on the fringe of British politics. PRR parties can be aided in this quest to maintain ownership of their issues if the mainstream parties chose a coercive strategy towards the PRR. This is evident in Sweden where no party can challenge SD on the immigration issue after taking a combative stance on the issue for so long. On the other side, if the mainstream parties chose cooption, or even more so if they

chose cooption, the mainstream might be able to challenge the PRR. For an example of this we can look towards Austria, where Kurz's ÖVP has taken a more hardline stance on immigration and has been able to siphon some of FPÖ's support because of it.

There are also several policies that the PRR must take up to be successful. The most obvious is the issue of immigration. The PRR must hold ownership of the immigration issue to be successful. This must be done in a seemingly moderate and humanitarian fashion. Overtly xenophobic reasoning for being hardline anti-immigration is still largely unacceptable by the populace at large. Therefore, the party must appear by giving non-traditional xenophobic reasoning for holding these positions. This is commonly achieved by framing immigration in a cultural lens, however economic justification has also been employed. Another common theme of successful PRR policy is that of welfare chauvinism. While it may seem counterintuitive as many PRR parties were founded as small government parties focused on lowering taxes this has changed especially in recent years. RN and the FPÖ have largely abandoned their liberal roots in favor of this new economic route, again forged by SD which claims to be the guardians of the Swedish welfare state. I expect this policy to become a key factor in PRR rhetoric in the coming years.

Many factors must perfectly align for PRR parties to be successful. However, by following the Sweden Democrat's new model the PRR should be electorally successful in their country. The 2010s have seen many breakthroughs, and much growth for the PRR. With SD leading in any recent Swedish polls, Lega holding a dominating lead in most Italian polls, The PVV on track to be kingmakers in the Dutch election, Marine looking poised for a rematch with President Macron in 2022 with increased support, and Vlaams Belang becoming the second largest party in Belgium the 2020s appear as if they could show even more success to the PRR.

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